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For Session 1900.

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CONTAINING THE
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TO THE TWENTY-FIRST MARCH.



PRINTED AND PUBLISHED,
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1900

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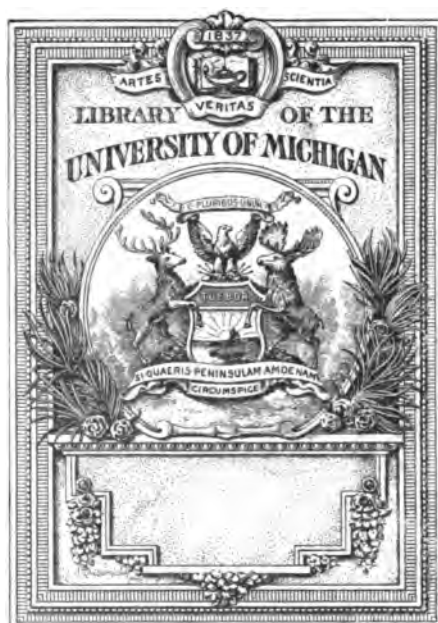
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THE
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FOURTH SERIES.

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

63 VICTORIÆ.

VOLUME LXXX.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE FIFTH DAY OF MARCH TO THE
TWENTY FIRST DAY OF MARCH.

1900.

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The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with—Donegal Railway [H.L.]. The same was ordered to lie on the table 1

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE—Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Barnsley Corporation Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that Clauses 17 to 47 relating to tramways be struck out of the Bill; That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petition for additional provisions in the Caledonian Railway Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to the Committee on the Bill to insert the additional provision; That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Newry, Keady, and Tynan Light Railway Bill ought to be dispensed with, provided that the words in Clause 21 of the Bill “or the Urban Council may, if they so think fit, include the amount to be raised by such rate in the sums to be raised by means of the Newry Town Rate, and such amount shall accordingly be raised as part of the Newry Town Rate, and in such case any statutory or other limit of the Newry Town Rate shall not apply in respect of the amount so to be raised” be struck out of the Bill; That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Bill ought to be dispensed with, provided that the powers to construct Railway No. 6 be struck out of the Bill; That the Committee have considered the special report from the examiner in respect of the Great Grimshy Street Tramways Bill [H.L.], and are of opinion that the further Standing Orders applicable to the Bill have been complied with. Read, and agreed to 1

Bristol Water Bill [H.L.]; **Cork, Bandon, and South Coast Railway Bill** [H.L.]; Committed 3

Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Bexhill and Rotherfield Railway Bill [H.L.]; Dorking Water Bill [H.L.]; Liverpool Overhead Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Ship Canal Bill [H.L.]; South Essex Water Bill [H.L.]; Great Central Railway Bill [H.L.]; Glasgow and South-Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; North British Railway Bill [H.L.]; Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [H.L.]. Committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection	3
--	---

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON ACT, 1898—Report to accompany Statutes and Regulations made by the Commissioners appointed under the University of London Act, 1898: together with an appendix of correspondence ...	3
TREATY SERIES, No (1900)—Procès-verbal recording the accession of the Russian Empire to the Cape Spartel International Lighthouse Convention of 31st March, 1865; signed at Tangier, 31st May, 1899 ... • ...	3
TRADE REPORTS—Annual Series: No. 2386. Finances of the Netherlands, for the year 1899-1900. Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table	3
WESTERN AUSTRALIA—The Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899. No. XIX. The Electoral Act, 1899. No. XX. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table	3

NEW BILLS.

Copyright Bill [H.L.]. (No. 18.)—A Bill to amend and consolidate the law relating to literary copyright. And Copyright (Artistic) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 19.)—A Bill to amend and consolidate the law relating to artistic copyright. Were presented by the Lord Monkswell; read the first time; and to be printed	4
Youthful Offenders Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING.]—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read. Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> .)	

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Earl Carrington</i>	8	<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i>	11
<i>Lord Norton</i>	8	<i>The Lord Bishop of Winchester</i>	12

On Question, agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

Money Lending Bill [H.L.] (COMMITTEE)—House in Committee (according to Order).										
<i>Lord Monkswell</i>	...	...	13	<i>Lord James of Hereford</i>	...					13
Bill reported without amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.										
Lunacy Bill [H.L.]—Amendment reported (according to Order); and Bill to be read 3 ^a on Thursday next...	14

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SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—CUSTODY OF PRISONERS—Question, Lord Loch ; Question postponed.

House adjourned at Twenty minutes before Six of the clock.

COMMONS : MONDAY, 5TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely:—Latimer Road and Acton Railway Bill ; Midland Railway Bill ; Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill ; Wolverhampton Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time. 20

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 67 COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 67 has been complied with, namely :—Newry, Keady, and Tynan Light Railway Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 20

British Gas Light Company (Staffordshire Potteries) Bill ; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill ; City and South London Railway Bill ; Jarrow and Hebburn Electricity Supply Bill. Read a second time, and committed 20

PETITIONS.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petition of the United Presbyterian Synod on Disestablishment, against ; to lie upon the Table... 20

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Standish ; Grangetown ; and South Skelton ; to lie upon the Table 21

OWNERS' SITE VALUES—Petition from St. Leonard, Shoreditch, for alteration of law ; to lie upon the Table 21

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845—Petition from Whitburn, for alteration of law ; to lie upon the Table... .. 21

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour, from Tuxford Hall ; Bradford ; and Beeston ; to lie upon the Table 21 .

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Broomfield ; London ; and West Hartlepool ; to lie upon the Table ... 21

Shops (Early Closing) Bill—Petition from Ramsbottom, in favour ; to lie upon the Table... .. 21

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Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill —Petitions in favour, from Middlesbrough (three); Honing; Broomfield; Southampton; Hartlepool; Sneinton; Ipswich; and Rusholme; to lie upon the Table	21
YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS —Petition from West Bromwich, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table	21

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

BRITISH MUSEUM —Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 20th February; <i>Mr. John Morley</i>]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 81.] ...	21
WESTERN AUSTRALIA (CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT ACT, 1899) —Copy presented, of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899, of Western Australia [by Act] to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 82.] ...	21
WESTERN AUSTRALIA (ELECTORAL ACT, 1899) —Copy presented, of the Electoral Act, 1899, of Western Australia [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 83.]	21
TREATY SERIES (No. 5, 1900) —Copy presented, of Procès-Verbal recording the accession of the Russian Empire to the Cape Spartel International Lighthouse Convention of 31st May, 1865. Signed at Tangier, 31st May, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	21
TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES) —Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 2386 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	21
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON ACT, 1898 —Copy presented, of Report to accompany Statutes and Regulations made by the Commissioners appointed under the University of London Act, 1898, together with an Appendix of Correspondence [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	21
FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1900-1901) —Copy ordered, “of Statement of Revenue and Expenditure as laid before the House by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget.”—(<i>Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer</i>). Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 84.]	21

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MUNICIPAL TRADING COMMITTEE—Questions, Mr. Kimber and Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour	50

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER)—

Motion made, and Question put, “That the proceedings of the Committee of Ways and Means, if the Committee be sitting at Twelve this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order, Sir ... House.”—(*Mr. Balfour.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 274 ; Noes, 30. (Division List ...)

WAYS AND MEANS—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the ...]

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Mr. ...)



TEA.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in lieu of the duty of customs now payable on tea, there shall be charged, levied, and paid on and after the 6th day of March, 1900, and until the 1st day of August, 1901, the following duty (that is to say):—Tea, the pound, 6d."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman</i> (<i>Stirling Burghs</i>)	79	<i>Mr. Holland</i> (<i>Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham</i>)	98
<i>Mr. T. M. Healy</i> (<i>Louth, N.</i>)	81	<i>Mr. Henderson</i> (<i>Staffordshire, W.</i>)	99
<i>Sir William Harcourt</i> (<i>Monmouthshire, W.</i>)	87	<i>Mr. Broadhurst</i> (<i>Leicester</i>)	100
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles</i> (<i>Lynn Regis</i>)	90	<i>Sir Albert Rollit</i> (<i>Islington, S.</i>)	102
<i>Mr. Haldane</i> (<i>Haddingtonshire</i>)	94	<i>Mr. Lough</i> (<i>Islington, W.</i>)	103
		<i>Mr. John Wilson</i> (<i>Falkirk Burghs</i>)	105
		<i>Mr. Lowles</i> (<i>Shoreditch, Haggerston</i>)	105

Attention drawn to the fact that there were not forty Members present (*Dr. Tanner, Cork County, Mid.*). House counted, and forty Members being found present :—

DISCUSSION—continued.

<i>Mr. Lowles</i>	106	<i>Mr. Kearley</i> (<i>Devonport</i>)	122
<i>Mr. Souttar</i> (<i>Dumfriesshire</i>)	106	<i>Mr. Mc'rae</i> (<i>Edinburgh, E.</i>)	124
<i>Mr. Lawrence</i> (<i>Liverpool, Abercromby</i>)	107	<i>Mr. Cohen</i> (<i>Islington, E.</i>)	128
<i>Major Jameson</i> (<i>Clare, W.</i>)	107	<i>Mr. Maddison</i> (<i>Sheffield, Brightside</i>)	129
<i>Mr. Bartley</i> (<i>Islington, N.</i>)	112	<i>Mr. J. W. Wilson</i> (<i>Worcestershire, N.</i>)	133
<i>Mr. Labouchere</i> (<i>Northampton</i>)	116	<i>Mr. John Redmond</i> (<i>Waterford</i>)	133
<i>Sir J. A. Willox</i> (<i>Liverpool, Everton</i>)	119-20	<i>Sir M. Hicks-Beach</i>	137

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'six pence,' and insert the words 'four pence.'"—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Question put, "That the words 'six pence' stand part of the Question."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 209 ; Noes, 60. (Division List No. 52.)

Main Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 223 ; Noes, 48. (Division List No. 53.)

Resolved, That in lieu of the duty of customs now payable on tea, there shall be charged, levied, and paid on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, the following duty (that is to say) :—

	£	s.	d.
Tea the pound	0	0	6

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TOBACCO.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That in addition to the duties of customs now payable on tobacco imported into Great Britain or Ireland, there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say) :—

		£	s.	d.
Tobacco, manufactured, namely :—				
Cigars	... .. the pound	0	0	6
Cavendish or negrohead	... .. the pound	0	0	6
Cavendish or negrohead, manufactured in bond	... .. } the pound	0	0	5
Other manufactured tobacco	... .. the pound	0	0	5
Snuff containing more than thirteen pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof	... .. } the pound	0	0	5
Snuff not containing more than thirteen pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof	... .. } the pound	0	0	6

Tobacco, unmanufactured, namely :—

Containing ten pounds or more of moisture in every hundred pounds weight thereof	the pound	0	0	4
Containing less than ten pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof	the pound	0	0	4

—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Amendment proposed—

"In lines 9 and 10 (cavendish or negrohead, manufactured in bond, the pound), to leave out the words 'five pence,' and insert the words 'one penny.'"
—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question put, "That the words 'five pence' stand part of the Question."

The Committee divided ; Ayes, 247 ; Noes, 30. (Division List No. 54.)

Main Question again proposed.

Another Amendment proposed—

"In line 24 (tobacco unmanufactured, etc., containing less than ten pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof), to leave out the words 'four pence,' and insert the words 'one penny.'"
—(*Mr. Patrick O'Brien.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'four pence' stand part of the Question."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That in addition to the duties of customs now payable on tobacco imported into Great Britain or Ireland, there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
Tobacco, manufactured, viz :—			
Cigars the pound	0	0	6
Cavendish or negrohead the pound	0	0	6
Cavendish or negrohead, manufactured in } bond }	the pound	0	0 5
Other manufactured tobacco the pound	0	0	5
Snuff containing more than thirteen pounds } of moisture in every one hundred pounds }	the pound	0	0 5
weight thereof }			
Snuff not containing more than thirteen } pounds of moisture in every one hundred }	the pound	0	0 6
pounds weight thereof }			

Tobacco, unmanufactured, viz:—

Containing ten pounds or more of moisture } in every hundred pounds weight thereof }	the pound	0	0	4
Containing less than ten pounds of moisture } in every one hundred pounds weight }	the pound	0	0	4
thereof }				

SPIRITS.—EXCISE.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed, “That in addition to the duty of excise now payable for every gallon computed at proof of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom there shall on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duty (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
For every gallon of spirits computed at proof	0	0	6
and so in proportion for any less quantity.”—(<i>Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.</i>)			

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the words ‘six pence,’ and insert the words ‘four pence.’”—
(*Major Jameson.*)

Question proposed, “That the words ‘six pence’ stand part of the Question.”—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*) 154

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 235; Noes, 22. (Division List No. 55.)

Main Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 231; Noes, 20. (Division List No. 56.)

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Resolved, That in addition to the duty of excise now payable for every gallon computed at proof of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duty (that is to say) :—

	£	s.	d.
For every gallon of spirits computed at proof ...	0	0	6
and so on in proportion for any less quantity.			

SPIRITS.—CUSTOMS.

4. Resolved, That in addition to the duties of customs now payable on spirits imported into Great Britain or Ireland, there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the duties following (that is to say) :—

	£	s.	d.
For every gallon of spirits computed at proof, of spirits of any description, except perfumed spirits ...	0	0	6
For every gallon of perfumed spirits ...	0	0	10
For every gallon of liqueurs, cordials, mixtures, and other preparations entered in such a manner as to indicate that the strength is not to be tested ..	0	0	8

And the duties of customs on the articles hereafter mentioned, being articles in which spirit is contained or in the manufacture of which spirit is used, shall be proportionately increased, and shall be as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Chloral hydrate ... the pound	0	1	4
Chloroform ... the pound	0	3	3
Collodion ... the gallon	1	6	3
Ether acetic ... the pound	0	1	11
Ether butyric ... the gallon	0	16	5
Ether sulphuric ... the gallon	1	7	5
Ethyl, iodide of ... the gallon	0	14	3
Ethyl bromide ... the pound	0	1	1
Ethyl chloride ... the gallon	0	16	5

—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

BEER.—EXCISE.

5. Motion made, and Question put, “That in addition to the duty of excise now payable in respect of beer brewed in the United Kingdom there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duty (that is to say)—

	£	s.	d.
For every thirty-six gallons of worts of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-five degrees the duty of ...	0	1	0
and so on in proportion for any difference in quantity or gravity.—(<i>Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.</i>)			

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 215 ; Noes, 18. (Division List No. 57.)

Resolved, That in addition to the duty of excise now payable in respect of beer brewed in the United Kingdom there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duty (that is to say): --

	£	s.	d.
For every thirty-six gallons of worts of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-five degrees the duty of ...	0	1	0
and so on in proportion for any difference in quantity or gravity.			

BEER.—CUSTOMS.

6. Resolved, That in addition to the duties of customs now payable on beer imported into Great Britain or Ireland there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say):—

In the case of beer called or similar to mum, spruce, black beer, or Berlin white beer or other preparations whether fermented or not fermented of a similar character—

For every thirty-six gallons where the worts thereof are or were before fermentation of a specific gravity—

	£	s.	d.
Not exceeding one thousand two hundred and fifteen degrees, a duty of ...	0	4	0
Exceeding one thousand two hundred and fifteen degrees, a duty of ...	0	4	8

In this case of every description of beer other than that above specified—

For every thirty-six gallons where the worts thereof were before fermentation of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-five degrees, a duty of ... 0 1 0 and so in proportion for any difference in gravity.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

7. Resolved, That it is expedient to prolong the term of certain annuities, and amend the law relating to the National Debt, the Customs, and the Inland Revenue.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

WAR LOAN.

8. Motion made, and Question proposed, “(1) That, towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st day of March, nineteen hundred, and the 31st day of March, nineteen hundred and one, sums not exceeding thirty-five million pounds be raised by either or both of the following methods:—

(a) By means of the creation of stock or bonds to be redeemed within a period not exceeding ten years, and bearing interest at a rate to be fixed by the Treasury; or

(b) By means of the issue of Treasury Bills; and that the principal and the interest on any money so raised be charged on the Consolidated Fund;

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(2) That all expenses incurred in connection with raising the said sums, including any additional remuneration to the banks of England and Ireland, be charged on the Consolidated Fund."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

It being after One of the Clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at half after One of the clock.

LORDS : TUESDAY, 6TH MARCH, 1900.

Francis John Earl of Wharncliffe and Viscount Carlton having succeeded to those dignities on the death of his uncle Edward Montagu Stuart Granville Earl of Wharncliffe, Viscount Carlton, etc., by virtue of a special remainder in a patent dated 15th January, 1876—Was (in the usual manner) introduced 165

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South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]—A petition of Messrs. Sharpe, Parker, Pritchards, Barham, and Lawford, of 9, Bridge Street, Westminster, parliamentary agents, praying for leave to present a petition of Tipton Urban District Council, praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill, although the time limited by Standing Order No. 92 for presenting such petition has expired; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and Standing Order No. 92 to be considered on Thursday next in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said petition 165

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Caledonian Railway Bill [H.L.]; Dearne Valley Railway Bill [H.L.], Committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection ... 166

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Church's Patent Bill [H.L.]; East Stirlingshire Water Bill [H.L.]; Falkirk and District Water Bill [H.L.]; Falkirk Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Motherwell Water Bill [H.L.]; East Shropshire Water Bill [H.L.]; Hemel Hempstead Corporation (Water) Bill [H.L.]; Great Berkhamstead Water Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills—viz: E. Grey, E. Camperdown (chairman), L. Manners of Haddon, L. Saltoun, L. Sinclair; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills	166
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Aston Manor Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Higham Ferrers Water Bill [H.L.]; Ipswich Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Lincoln Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]; Menstone Water (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Newport Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Newport (Monmouthshire) Gas Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.]	167
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REPORT FROM COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz. :— London and North Western Railway Bill; London and North Western Railway (Wales) Bill. Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time ... 174

Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Bill; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill; Read a second time and committed.

Huntingdon Corporation Bill [by Order]—Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

Knott End Railway Bill [by Order]—Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 20th March.

Ossett Gas Bill [by Order]—Read a second time, and committed.

South Eastern Metropolitan Tramways Bill [by Order]—Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

Wellingborough and District Tramroads Bill [by Order]—Read a second time, and committed.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Wellingborough and District Tramroads Bill to inquire whether it is desirable that Clause 44 of the Bill (Cheap fares for the labouring classes) should be amended in respect of the hours at which the cars should be run, the number of cars to be provided, and the maximum and the minimum fares to be charged.—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Taunton Corporation Bill—Motion made and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Taunton Corporation Bill to provide in Part III. of the Bill that the powers of the Corporation and their officers to inspect cows and dairies outside the borough be not exercised without the previous order of two Justices sitting in Petty Sessions and having jurisdiction in the district wherein the dairy is situate, and that such order be not made unless the said Justices are satisfied that the local authority of the said district has not already dealt with the case." (*Mr. Strachey.*)

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Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 109; Noes, 172. (Division List No. 58)

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LANCASTER CORPORATION BILL (By Order)—Motion Made and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Lancaster Corporation Bill to leave out Clauses 90 and 91 (Provisions as to tithe in the township of Lancaster)."—(*Mr. Carvell Williams.*)

Mr. Perks (*Lincolnshire, Louth*) 188 *Mr. J. W. Lowther* (*Cumberland, Penrith*) 189

Question put, and negatived.

SOUTH METROPOLITAN GAS BILL (By Order)—Motion made and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the South Metropolitan Gas Bill to insert such Clauses in the Bill as may be required to give effect to recommendations 1 and 2 of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Gas Companies, as follows:—(1) That the standard price shall be reduced to 3s. 3d. to carry the standard dividend of 10 per cent., and that the existing scale of increase and decrease for dividend of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every penny of increase or decrease of price below or above 3s. 3d. be maintained, and that a secondary or additional scale be imposed which should permit of an increase or decrease of dividend over and above that regulated by the present scale of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every complete 3d. of decrease or increase below or above the standard price of 3s. 3d. (2) That the area south of the River Thames, at present part of the district of the Gas Light and Coke Company, should be transferred from the Gas Light and Coke Company to the South Metropolitan Gas Company at a fair and reasonable price."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Mr. Marks (*Tower Hamlets, St. Georges*) 191

Amendment proposed—

By inserting after the word 'Committee,' in line 2, the words 'to consider whether it is desirable.'"—(*Sir James Rankin.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

DISCUSSION:—

The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Ritchie, Croydon*) 195 *Mr. Lough* (*Islington, W.*) 196

Question put and agreed to.

Amendment made—

"To insert after the word 'Committee,' in line 2, the words 'to consider whether it is desirable.'"—(*Sir James Rankin.*)

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an instruction to the Committee on the South Metropolitan Gas Bill to consider whether it is desirable to insert such Clauses in the Bill as may be required to give effect to Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Gas Companies as follows:—(1) That the standard price should be reduced to 3s. 3d. to carry the standard dividend of 10 per cent., and that the existing scale of increase and decrease for dividend of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every penny of increase or decrease of price below or above 3s. 3d. be maintained and that a secondary or additional scale be imposed which should permit of an increase or decrease of dividend over and above that regulated by the present scale of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every complete 3d. of decrease or increase below or above the standard price of 3s. 3d. (2) That the area south of the river Thames, at present part of the district of the Gas Light and Coke Company, should be transferred from the Gas Light and Coke Company to the South Metropolitan Gas Company at a fair and reasonable price... .. 197

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[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

WAR LOAN.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"(1) That towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, and the 31st day of March, 1901, sums not exceeding £35,000,000 be raised by

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either or both of the following methods :—(a) By means of the creation of stock or bonds to be redeemed within a period not exceeding ten years, and bearing interest at a rate to be fixed by the Treasury ; or (b) By means of the issue of Treasury Bills ; and that the principal and the interest on the money so raised be charged on the Consolidated Fund.

(2) That all expenses incurred in connection with raising the said sums, including any additional remuneration to the Banks of England and Ireland, be charged on the Consolidated Fund.”—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

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Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 161 ; Noes, 26. (Division List No. 59.)

INCOME TAX.

2. Resolved, that income tax shall be charged for the year beginning the 6th day of April, 1900, at the rate of one shilling.—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

BROKERS' CONTRACT NOTES.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed, “That there shall be charged upon a note sent by any person carrying on the business of a broker to his principal advising him of the sale or purchase of any goods, wares, or merchandise, the stamp duty following (that is to say) :

If the goods, wares or merchandise are—

Of the value of five pounds and under the value
of one hundred pounds one penny.

Of the value of one hundred pounds or upwards ... one shilling.”

—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

<i>Sir M. Hicks-Beach</i>	225	<i>Mr. T. P. O'Connor</i> (Liverpool, Scotland)	256
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Question put, and agreed to

ESTATE DUTY.

4. Resolved, that in the case of a person dying after the 31st day March, 1900, property, real or personal, in which that person or any other person had an interest limited to cease on the death of the deceased shall, for the purpose of the Finance Act, 1894, and the Acts amending that Act, be deemed to pass on the death of the deceased notwithstanding that such interest has been surrendered, assured, or otherwise disposed of during the lifetime of the deceased, notwithstanding that such interest has been surrendered, assured, or otherwise disposed of during the lifetime of the deceased whether for value or not to or for the benefit of the remainderman or reversioner, except where the surrender, assurance, or disposition was *bona fide* made twelve months before the death of the deceased, and *bona fide* possession and enjoyment of the property was assumed thereunder by that remainderman or reversioner immediately upon the surrender, assurance, or disposition, and thenceforward retained to the entire exclusion of the person making the same, and of any benefit to him by contract or otherwise.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

FINANCE ACT, 1894 (MODIFICATION OF EXCLUSIONS.)

5. Resolved, that the exclusion of property from aggregation under section four of the Finance Act, 1894, shall cease to take effect except as regards property in which the deceased never had an interest, but that a limited abatement or return of the duty may be allowed in certain cases in the event of the aggregation with any other property of property which passes on the death of the deceased under a disposition made by a person (other than the deceased) who died before the expiration of the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

FINANCE ACT, 1896 (REPEAL OF EXCLUSIONS.)

6. Resolved, that for the purpose of the rate and the amount of estate duty or settlement estate duty, the exclusion under section seventeen of the Finance Act, 1896, of any fraction from the principal value of the estate shall cease.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)
Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS [5TH MARCH] REPORT.—Resolutions reported :—

TEA.

1. "That, in lieu of the duty of customs now payable on tea, there shall be charged, levied, and paid on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, the following duty (that is to say) :—

Tea per pound £0 0s. 6d."

Resolution read the first and second time.

Motion made and Question proposed :—"That the House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 258 *Sir M. Hicks-Beach* 258

Question put, and agreed to.

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TOBACCO.

2. "That in addition to the duties of customs now payable on tobacco imported into Great Britain or Ireland, there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say) :—

	£	s.	d.
Tobacco, manufactured, viz. :—			
Cigars the pound	0	0	6
Cavendish or negrohead the pound	0	0	6
Cavendish or negrohead, manufactured in } bond }	the pound	0	0 5
Other manufactured tobacco the pound	0	0	5
Snuff containing more than thirteen pounds } of moisture in every one hundred pounds } weight thereof }	the pound	0	0 5
Snuff not containing more than thirteen } pounds of moisture in every one hundred } pounds weight thereof }	the pound	0	0 6

Tobacco, unmanufactured, viz. :—

Containing ten pounds or more of moisture } in every hundred pounds weight thereof }	the pound	0	0 4
Containing less than ten pounds of moisture } in every one hundred pounds weight } thereof }	the pound	0	0 4.

SPIRITS.—EXCISE.

3. "That in addition to the duty of excise now payable for every gallon computed at proof of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duty (that is to say) :—

	£	s.	d.
For every gallon of spirits computed at proof and so in proportion for any less quantity" -	0	0	6.

SPIRITS.—CUSTOMS.

4. "That, in addition to the duties of customs now payable on spirits imported into Great Britain or Ireland, there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the duties following (that is to say) :—

	£	s.	d.
For every gallon of spirits computed at proof, of spirits of any description, except perfumed spirits	0	0	6
For every gallon of perfumed spirits	0	0	10
For every gallon of liqueurs, cordials, mixtures, and other preparations entered in such a manner as to indicate that the strength is not to be tested	0	0	8

And the duties of customs on the articles hereafter mentioned, being articles in which spirit is contained or in the manufacture of which spirit is used, shall be proportionately increased, and shall be as follows :—

						£	s.	d.
Chloral hydrate	...	...	...	...	the lb.	0	1	4
Chloroform	...	...	...	...	the lb.	0	3	3
Collodion	...	...	...	...	the gal.	1	6	3
Ether acetic	...	...	...	...	the lb.	0	1	11
Ether butyric	...	...	...	...	the gal.	0	16	5
Ether sulphuric	...	...	...	...	the gal.	1	7	5
Ethyl, iodide of	...	...	...	...	the gal.	0	14	3
Ethyl bromide	...	...	...	...	the lb.	0	1	1
Ethyl chloride	...	...	...	...	the gal.	0	16	5."

BEER.—EXCISE.

5. "That in addition to the duty of excise now payable in respect of beer brewed in the United Kingdom there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say) :—

	£	s.	d.
For every thirty-six gallons of worts of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-five degrees the duty of	...	0	1 0

and so on in proportion for any difference in quantity and gravity.

BEER.—CUSTOMS.

6. "That in addition to the duties of customs now payable on beer imported into Great Britain or Ireland there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say) :—

In the case of beer called or similar to mum, spruce, black beer, or Berlin white beer or other preparations whether fermented or not fermented of a similar character—

For every thirty-six gallons where the worts thereof are or were before fermentation of a specific gravity—

Not exceeding one thousand two hundred and fifteen degrees, a duty of	...	...	...	...	...	0	4	0
Exceeding one thousand two hundred and fifteen degrees, a duty of	...	...	...	...	...	0	4	8

In the case of every description of beer other than that above specified—

For every thirty-six gallons where the worts thereof were before fermentation of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-five degrees, a duty of

and so in proportion for any difference in gravity."

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AMENDMENT OF LAW.

7. "That it is expedient to prolong the term of certain annuities, and amend the law relating to the National Debt, the Customs, and the Inland Revenue."

Resolutions agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James William Lowther, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Hanbury.

SUPPLY (2ND MARCH)—REPORT.

Resolutions reported :—

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1900–1901.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £5,527,000, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the expense of wages, etc., to officers, seamen, and boys, coast-guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £845,800, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the expenses of works, buildings, and repairs, at home and abroad, including the cost of superintendence, purchase of sites, grants in aid, and other charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

CIVIL SERVICE (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES), 1899–1900.

CLASS V.

3. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £162,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for grants in aid of the expenses of the British Protectorates in Uganda and in Central and East Africa."

4. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £58,905, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for sundry colonial services, including certain grants in aid."

5. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £10,000, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the subsidies to certain telegraph companies."

6. "That a sum not exceeding £2,847, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, to make good the net loss on transactions connected with the raising of money for the various treasury chests abroad in the year 1898–9."

CLASS VI.

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £60,686, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, to make good the sum by which the interest accrued in the year ended 20th November, 1899, from

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securities held by the National Debt Commissioners on account of 'The Fund for the Banks for Savings' and 'The Fund for Friendly Societies' was insufficient to meet the interest which the said Commissioners are obliged by statute to pay and credit to trustees of savings banks and to friendly societies; and also the sum by which the interest accrued in the year ended 31st December, 1899, from securities held by the National Debt Commissioners on account of 'The Post Office Savings Bank Fund,' was insufficient to meet the interest which the said Commissioners are obliged by statute to pay and credit to depositors and the expenses incurred during that year in the execution of the Acts relating thereto."

CLASS VII.

8. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £500, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the salaries and other expenses of temporary commissions, committees, and special inquiries."

9. "That a sum, not exceeding £23,327, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for making good certain sums written off from the assets of the Local Loans Fund."

CLASS III.

10. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,440, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the salaries and expenses of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland and of the prisons under their control."

CLASS IV.

11. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £3,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Department of Science and Art in respect of Science Schools."

Resolutions agreed to.

SHOPS BILL [Second Reading]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this Bill be now read a second time."

Whereupon Motion made and Question put, "That this House do now adjourn." (*Lord Hugh Cecil.*)

The House divided—Ayes, 110; Noes, 61. [Division List No. 60.]

Adjourned accordingly at half after Eight of the clock.

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 7TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill ; Military Lands Provisional Order Bill. Read the third time, and passed	265
CHRISTCHURCH, BOURNEMOUTH, AND WINTON TRAMWAYS —Report [6th March] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read. Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Atherley Jones and Mr. Samuel Evans...	265

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PETITIONS.

Boilers Registration and Inspection Bill —Petition of the Mining Association of Great Britain, against ; to lie upon the Table	265
Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill —Petition from Faversham, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	265
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill —Petitions in favour, from Brondesbury ; Needham Market ; and Chelmsford ; to lie upon the Table	265
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill —Petitions in favour, from Blackburn ; Chelmsford ; Leicester ; and Elgin ; to lie upon the Table	265
Sunday Closing [Monmouthshire] Bill —Petitions in favour, from Needham Market ; Brondesbury ; Stamford ; St. Mary's ; Sneinton ; Stockton-on-Tees ; Holt ; Blaenavon ; Liverpool ; Middleton in Teesdale ; Sheffield ; Llanhilleth ; Chelmsford ; Talywain ; Bristol ; and Portsmouth ; to lie upon the Table	265
Town Councils (Scotland) Bill —Petition from Doune, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	266

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION —Copy presented, of Forty-ninth Report from the Church Estates Commissioners for the year preceding 1st March, 1900 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table	266
SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884 —Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 22nd February, 1900, declaring that Mr. Roger Taning Sleigh, Sub-Postmaster, Morley, Leeds, Post Office department, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his department [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table	266
CIVIL SERVICES (EXCESS), 1898-9 —Copy presented, of Statement of the Sum required to be voted in order to make good an Excess on the Grant for Prisons, England and the Colonies, for the year ended on the 31st March, 1899 [by Command] ; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 87]	266
UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (ORDINANCE) —Copy presented, of Ordinance No. 1 of the University Court of the University of Edinburgh, providing for the separation of the teaching of Medical Jurisprudence or Forensic Medicine and Public Health in the University of Edinburgh [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 88]	266

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Boilers Registration and Inspection Bill—[SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time." (*Mr. Fenwick*).

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Fortescue Flannery</i> (<i>Yorkshire, Shipley</i>)	273	<i>Mr. Galloway</i> (<i>Manchester, S.W.</i>)	287
<i>Mr. Emmott</i> (<i>Oldham</i>)	277	<i>Col. Pilkington</i> (<i>Lancashire, Newton</i>)	289
<i>Sir Alfred Hickman</i> (<i>Wolverhampton, W.</i>)	284		

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Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘upon this day six months.’”—(*Sir Alfred Hickman.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Jonathan Samuel (Stockton)</i>	290	<i>Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.)</i> ...	306
<i>Sir William Houldsworth (Manchester, N.W.)</i> ...	293	<i>Mr. Fenwick (Northumberland, Wansbeck)</i>	308
<i>Mr. Provand (Glasgow, Blackfriars)</i>	295	<i>Sir John Brunner (Cheshire, Northwich)</i>	309
<i>Mr. Renshaw (Renfrew, W.)</i> ...	296	<i>Col. Lockwood (Essex, Epping)</i> ...	311
<i>Mr. John Burns (Battersea)</i> ...	298	<i>Mr. Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham)</i>	311
<i>The Secretary of State for the Home Dept. (Sir M. White Ridley, Lancs., Blackpool)</i> ...	301		

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 312

Old Age Pensions Bill—Order for the Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed—“That the Bill be now read a second time.”—(*Sir J. Fortescue Flannery.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Flower (Bradford, W.)</i> ...	319	<i>Mr. Steadman (Tower Hamlets, Stepney)</i>	326
<i>Mr. Cripps (Gloucestershire, Stroud)</i>	320	<i>The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford)</i> ...	327
<i>Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston)</i>	323	<i>Mr. Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham)</i>	327
<i>The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.)</i> ...	325		

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

WAYS AND MEANS—[6th March]—Resolutions reported :—

WAR LOAN.

1. “(1) That, towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the thirty-first day of March nineteen hundred and the thirty-first day of March nineteen hundred and one, sums, not exceeding thirty-five million pounds, be raised by either or both of the following methods :—(a) By means of the creation of stock or bonds to be redeemed within a period not exceeding ten years, and bearing interest at a rate to be fixed by the Treasury ; or (b) By means of the issue of Treasury Bills ; and that the principal and the interest on any money so raised be charged on the Consolidated Fund ; (2) That all expenses incurred in connection with raising the said sums, including any additional remuneration to the Banks of England and Ireland, be charged on the Consolidated Fund.”

INCOME TAX.

2. "That Income Tax shall be charged for the year beginning the sixth day of April nineteen hundred at the rate of one shilling."

BROKERS' CONTRACT NOTES.

3. "That there shall be charged upon a note sent by any person carrying on the business of a broker to his principal advising him of the sale or purchase of any goods, wares, or merchandise, the stamp duty following (that is to say):—If the goods, wares, or merchandise are—

Of the value of five pounds and under the value of one hundred pounds ... one penny.

Of the value of one hundred pounds or upwards ... one shilling."

ESTATE DUTY.

4. "That in the case of a person dying after the thirty-first day of March, nineteen hundred, property real or personal in which that person or any other person had an interest limited to cease on the death of the deceased shall, for the purpose of the Finance Act, 1894, and the Acts amending that Act, be deemed to pass on the death of the deceased notwithstanding that such interest has been surrendered, assured, or otherwise disposed of during the lifetime of the deceased, whether for value or not to or for the benefit of the remainderman or reversioner, except where the surrender, assurance, or disposition was *bonâ fide* made twelve months before the death of the deceased, and *bonâ fide* possession and enjoyment of the property was assumed thereunder by that remainderman or reversioner immediately upon the surrender, assurance, or disposition, and thenceforward retained to the entire exclusion of the person making the same, and of any benefit to him by contract or otherwise."

FINANCE ACT, 1894 (MODIFICATIONS OF EXCLUSIONS).

5. "That the exclusions of property from aggregation under section four of the Finance Act, 1894, shall cease to take effect except as regards property in which the deceased never had an interest, but that a limited abatement or return of the duty may be allowed in certain cases in the event of the aggregation with any other property of property which passes on the death of deceased under a disposition made by a person (other than the deceased) who died before the expiration of the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four."

FINANCE ACT, 1896 (REPEAL OF EXCLUSIONS).

6. "That for the purpose of the rate and the amount of estate duty or settlement estate duty, the exclusion under section seventeen of the Finance Act, 1896, of any fraction from the principal value of the estate shall cease."

Resolutions read a second time.

First Resolution agreed to.

Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 330

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James William Lowther, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Hanbury.

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War Loan Bill—"To provide for Raising Money for the present War in South Africa," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time on Monday next; and to be printed. [Bill 114.] Subsequent Resolutions agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Gentlemen appointed to bring in a Bill upon the Resolutions reported from the Committee of Ways and Means on the 6th instant, and then agreed to by the House, that they do make provision therein pursuant to Resolutions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.—
(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 330

Ancient Monuments Protection Bill—Read a second time, and committed for Tuesday next 330

Finance Bill—"To grant certain duties of Customs and Inland Revenue, to alter other duties, and to amend the Law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue and the National Debt, and to make other provision for the financial arrangements of the year," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next; and to be printed. [Bill 115] 330

TRUCK ACTS AMENDMENT—Bill to amend the Truck Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Sir Walter Foster, and Mr. Havelock Wilson.

Truck Acts Amendment Bill—"To amend the Truck Acts," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, April 4th, and to be printed. [Bill 116.] 331

SHOP HOURS ACTS AMENDMENT—Bill to amend the Shop Hours Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Provand, Mr. Samuel Smith, and Mr. Seton-Karr.

Shop Hours Acts Amendment Bill—"To amend the Shop Hours Acts," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, April 27th next, and to be printed. [117.]... .. 331

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE—First report brought up, and read; report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 89.]

VISIT OF THE QUEEN TO LONDON—On the motion for the adjournment of the House, *The First Lord of the Treasury* (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 331

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—NEWS FROM THE FRONT—Mr. A. J. Balfour 332

House adjourned a quarter before Six of the clock.

LORDS: THURSDAY, 8TH MARCH, 1900.

EARL OF DESART—Ordered and Directed, by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, That a Certificate be sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, stating that the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom has reported to the House of Lords that the right of the Earl of Desart to Vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of him the said Lord Chancellor; and that the House of Lords has ordered such report to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland; and it is hereby also Ordered, That the said Report of the said Lord Chancellor be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland 333

THE LORD SANDHURST—Took the Oath 333

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Cork Electric Tramways [H.L.] ; the same was ordered to lie on the Table	333
Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]—The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Orders made on the 23rd of February and on Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed	333
Barnsley Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Read second time	333
Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust, Limited, Bill [H.L.]—Read second time (according to order)	333
South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Standing Order No. 92 considered (according to order), and dispensed with, with respect to a petition of Tipton Urban District Council : Leave given to present the said petition	333
Dublin Electric Lighting Bill ; Blackpool, St. Anne's, and Lytham Tramways Bill ; The Order of Tuesday last referring the Examiner's certificates on non-compliance with the Standing Orders to the Standing Orders Committee, discharged.	334
North Eastern Railway Steam Vessels Bill [H.L.] ; North Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.] ; The Order made on Tuesday last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bills, discharged	334
London Hydraulic Power Company Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection that the five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Aston Manor Tramways Bill [H.L.] and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the London Hydraulic Power Company Bill [H.L.] ; read, and agreed to ; all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill	334
Aston Manor Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; Higham Ferrers Water Bill [H.L.] ; Ipswich Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; Lincoln Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; Menstone Water (Transfer) Bill [H.L.] ; Newport Corporation Bill [H.L.] ; Newport (Monmouthshire) Gas Bill [H.L.] ; London Hydraulic Power Company Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Lord Manners of Haddon be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Dartrey ; read, and agreed to	334
Church's Patent Bill [H.L.] ; East Stirlingshire Water Bill [H.L.] ; Falkirk and District Water Bill [H.L.] ; Falkirk Corporation Bill [H.L.] ; Motherwell Water Bill [H.L.] ; East Shropshire Water Bill [H.L.] ; Hemel Hempstead Corporation (Water) Bill [H.L.] ; Great Berkhamstead Water Bill [H.L.] Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Dartrey be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Manners of Haddon ; read and agreed to	335
Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill ; Military Lands Provisional Order Bill. Brought from the Commons	335

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Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill [H.L.] (No. 21); Military Lands Provisional Order Bill [H.L.] (No. 22.) Read the first time; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners ...	335
Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [H.L.]; Edinburgh Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Rotherhithe and Ratcliffe Tunnel Bill [H.L.]; London Sea Water Supply Bill [H.L.]; Sunderland Corporation Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.] Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:—V. Falkland, L. Colchester, L. Blythwood, L. Muncaster, L. Avebury (chairman); agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday, the 20th instant, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills	335

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

CANADA—WEST INDIES —Agreement between the Canadian Government and Messrs. Pickford and Black to establish a steamship service between Canada and the West Indies ...	336
CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION —Forty-ninth Report from the Church Estates Commissioners, for the year preceding 1st March, 1900. Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table ...	336
GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION (CAPITAL AND INCOME ACCOUNTS, 1898-99) —Accounts of the receipt and expenditure of the capital and of the income derived from the lands and other property held for the benefit of Greenwich Hospital and the foundation of Samuel Travers, Esquire, for the year ended 31st March, 1899; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon ...	336
SUPERANNUATION —Treasury Minute, dated 22nd February, 1900, declaring that Mr. Roger Fanning Sleigh, sub-postmaster, Morley, Leeds, under the General Post Office Department, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table	336
UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (SECTION 21) —Ordinance No. 1 of the University Court of the University of Edinburgh providing for the separation of the teaching of medical jurisprudence of forensic medicine and public health in the University of Edinburgh; laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 20.) ...	336
SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM —Statement of the funds, 5th January, 1900; Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table ...	337

PETITION.

CENSUS —Petition that a statement may be made in the next census of the religious denominations to which those enumerated belong; of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; read, and ordered to lie upon the Table	337
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PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Lunacy Bill [H.L.]—Read third time (according to order); Amendment made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons ... 337

SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC AND ORANGE FREE STATE—STATE AND PRIVATE RAILWAYS—Moved, “That an humble address be presented to Her Majesty for a Return with reference to each of the railways in the Orange Free State and in the South African Republic respectively, showing whether such railways belonging to the State or to private companies; and also giving the cost or capital value of the same.”—(*The Earl of Camperdown*.)

The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Earl of Selborne*) ... 341

On Question, agreed to.

U.K. AMBASSADOR AT WASHINGTON—RETENTION OF LORD PAUNCEFOTE BEYOND HIS PERIOD OF OFFICE—

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord Newton</i> ...	342	<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	344
<i>The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs</i> (<i>The Marquess of Salisbury</i>) ...	343		

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—CLOTHING FOR THE TROOPS—Question, *The Earl of Leven and Melville*; Answer, *The Secretary of State for War* (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*)... 344

BOER PRISONERS—PLACE OF CUSTODY—Question, *Lord Loch*; Answer, *The Marquess of Lansdowne* ... 347

RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS AND THE MILITIA—Question, *Viscount Hardinge*; Answer, *The Marquess of Lansdowne* ... 350

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five of the clock.

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 8TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH)—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely:—*Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill*. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time ... 352

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH)—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, namely:—*London and South Western Railway Bill*. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders ... 352

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Dublin Electric Lighting Bill—Order for Second Reading read.

QUESTIONS :—

<i>Mr. William Redmond</i> (<i>Clare, E.</i>)	352	<i>Mr. Galloway</i> (<i>Manchester, S.W.</i>)	...	352
					<i>Mr. T. M. Healy</i> (<i>Louth, N.</i>)	...	353

Bill ordered to be read a second time upon Thursday, 22nd March.

Christchurch, Bournemouth, and Winton Tramways Bill—"To empower the Poole and District Electric Traction Company, Limited, to construct Tramways from Christchurch and Winton to Bournemouth, and in Bournemouth; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 353

Gas Light and Coke Company Bill (by Order)—Motion made and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert clauses in the Bill to carry into effect the recommendations of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Gas Companies (1899) as follows:—"(1) That the standard price should be reduced to 3s. 3d. to carry the standard dividend of 10 per cent., and that the existing scale of increase and decrease for dividend of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every penny of decrease or increase of price below or above 3s. 3d. be maintained, and that a secondary or additional scale be imposed which should permit of an increase or decrease of dividend over and above that regulated by the present scale of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every complete 3d. of decrease or increase below or above the standard price of 3s. 3d. (2) That the area south of the River Thames, at present part of the district of the Gas Light and Coke Company, should be transferred from the Gas Light and Coke Company to the South Metropolitan Gas Company, fair and reasonable price being paid. (3) That the charge made by the Gas Light and Coke Company for the rents of automatic meters and stoves should be the same to consumers north and south of the Thames for fittings of the same quality and capacity."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Mr. Marks (*Tower Hamlets, St. George's*) ... 355

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, after the second word 'to,' to insert the words 'inquire whether it be desirable to'"—(*Sir James Rankin*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Boulnois</i> (<i>Marylebone, E.</i>)	359	<i>Mr. Brynmor Jones</i> (<i>Swansea District</i>)	...	361
<i>Mr. Pickersgill</i> (<i>Bethnal Green, S.W.</i>)	...	<i>Mr. Cohen</i> (<i>Islington, E.</i>)	...	361
<i>The President of the Board of Trade</i> (<i>Mr. Ritchie, Croydon</i>)	...	<i>Mr. Lowles</i> (<i>Shoreditch, Haggerston</i>)	...	362
	360	<i>Mr. Lough</i> (<i>Islington, W.</i>)	...	362

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Mr. Pickersgill ... 362

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Police and Sanitary Regulations Bill—Motion made and Question proposed, “That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding nine members, to whom shall be committed all private Bills promoted by municipal and other local authorities, by which it is proposed to create powers relating to police and sanitary regulations which deviate from, or are in extension of, or repugnant to, the general law; that the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; that three be the quorum of the Committee.”—(*The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department.*)

DISCUSSION : —

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<i>The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Jesse Collings, Birmingham, Bordesley)</i> ...	364	<i>Mr. Strachey (Somersetshire, S.)</i>	364
		<i>Mr. Hulsey (Hertfordshire, Watford)</i>	364

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum of the Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to insert in any Bill referred to them any provision which is already in force in the district to which the Bill applies under any public Act, or which might be put in force by adopting the provisions of any adoptive Act.”—(*The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department.*)

Mr. Strachey 365

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That it be an Instruction to the Committee in their Report, under Standing Orders 150 and 173A, to state their reasons for granting any powers in conflict with, deviation from, in excess of the general law.”—(*The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department.*)

Sir F. S. Powell

Question put, and agreed to.

Question proposed, “That in the case of Bills reported from the Committee, three clear days shall intervene between the date when the Report of the Committee is circulated with the Votes and the consideration of the Bill.”

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That in the case of Bills reported from the Committee, three clear days shall intervene between the date when the Report of the Committee is circulated with the Votes and the consideration of the Bill.”—(*Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Mr. Coghill, and Sir Charles Cameron (Glasgow, Bridgeton); Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square) and Mr. A. J. Balfour	401
THE QUEEN AND THE IRISH PEOPLE—Statement, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford)	402

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

BOILERS REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION [No. 3] BILL—Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, 21st March, read, and discharged	403
Bill withdrawn.	

Electoral Disabilities (Military Service) Bill—Second Reading—Order
for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a
second time."—(*The Secretary of State for the Home Department.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.)</i>	404	<i>Gen. Laurie (Penbrooke and Haverfordwest)</i>	404
<i>Col. Milward (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon)</i>	404	<i>Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.)</i>	405

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the question, in order to
add the words 'no Bill granting facilities for relief of electoral disabilities to
Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers who have proceeded on active service will be
satisfactory to this House which does not extend similar facilities for relief to
the members of the Royal Navy and Regular Army who are now employed on
active service in South Africa,' instead thereof."—(*General Laurie.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part
of the Question."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i>	406	<i>Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.)</i>	409
<i>Serjeant Hemphill (Tyrone, N.)</i>	409	<i>Mr. Asquith (Fife, E.)</i>	410
<i>Mr. Arthur J. Moore (Lon- donderry)</i>	408	<i>Mr. T. M. Healy</i>	410
<i>The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight)</i>	408	<i>The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool)</i>	410

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Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Parker Smith (Lanarkshire, Partick) ... 411

Main Question put, and agreed to ; Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

SUPPLY—Considered in Committee (in the Committee). [Mr. Grant Lawson (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1900–1901.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, “That a sum, not exceeding £1,715,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Victualling and Clothing for the Navy, including the cost of Victualling Establishments at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Commander Bethell (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness)</i> ...	411	<i>Admiral Field (Sussex, Eastbourne)</i> ...	415
<i>Capt. Phillpotts (Devonshire, Torquay)</i> ...	412	<i>Communder Bethell</i> ...	416
<i>Mr. Kearley (Devonport)</i> ...	412	<i>Sir John Baker (Portsmouth)</i> ...	416
<i>The First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square)</i>	413	<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i>	416
		<i>Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee)</i>	417
		<i>Mr. Mendl (Plymouth)</i> ...	418
		<i>Commander Young (Berkshire, Wokingham)</i> ...	418

Motion made and Question proposed, “That Item B (Wages of Artificers) be reduced by £100.”—(*Mr. Arthur Morton.*)

DISCUSSION ;—

<i>Capt. Norton, (Newington, W.)</i> ...	419	<i>Mr. Goschen</i> ...	425
<i>Sir John Baker</i> ...	421	<i>Mr. Edmund Robertson</i> ...	426
<i>Mr. Goschen</i> ...	421	<i>Mr. Arthur Morton (Deptford)</i> ...	426
<i>Sir Chas. Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean)</i> ...	422	<i>Mr. E. J. C. Morton (Devonport)</i>	426
<i>Mr. Steadman (Tower Hamlets, Stepney)</i> ...	423	<i>Mr. Grey (West Ham, N.)</i> ...	428
<i>Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar)</i> ...	424	<i>Mr. Kearley</i> ...	428
<i>Mr. Tritton (Lambeth, Norwood)</i> ...	425	<i>Mr. Goschen</i> ...	428
		<i>Mr. John Burns (Battersea)</i> ...	429
		<i>Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich)</i> ...	430
		<i>Mr. Goschen</i> ...	432

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 75 ; Noes, 139. (Division List No. 61.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. £208,800, Medical Establishments and Services.

DISCUSSION—

<i>Commander Bethell</i> ...	433	<i>Dr. Tanner (Cork County, Mid)</i> ...	434
<i>The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.)</i>	433		

Resolution agreed to.

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3. £13,300, Martial Law, &c.

4. £92,300, Educational Services.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. William Redmond</i> (Clare, E.)	435	<i>Mr. Caldwell</i> (Lanarkshire, Mid)	439
<i>Mr. Goschen</i>	436	<i>Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth</i> (Lan-	440
<i>Mr. Arthur J. Moore</i>	436	<i>cashire, Clitheroe)</i>	441
<i>Sir Charles Dilke</i>	437	<i>Sir John Colomb</i> (Great Yarmouth)	441
<i>Dr. Tanner</i>	437	<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles</i>	441
<i>The Secretary to the Admiralty</i> (Mr. Macartney, Antrim, S.)	437	<i>Admiral Field</i>	443
<i>Mr. Weir</i> (Ross and Cromarty)	437	<i>Captain Phillpotts</i>	444
<i>Mr. Austen Chamberlain</i> ...	438	<i>Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth</i> ...	444
		<i>Mr. Goschen</i>	445
		<i>Captain Phillpotts</i>	447
		<i>Dr. Tanner</i>	447

Resolution agreed to.

5. £66,900, Scientific Services.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Admiral Field</i>	448	<i>Mr. Buchanan</i> (Aberdeenshire, E.)	449
<i>Captain Phillpotts</i>	448	<i>Mr. Goschen</i>	449

Resolution agreed to.

6. 271,100, Royal Naval Reserves.

<i>Commander Bethell</i>	449
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Resolution agreed to.

7. £3,004,700, Naval Armaments.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Charles Dilke</i>	450	<i>Sir John Colomb</i>	451
<i>Mr. Goschen</i>	451	<i>Admiral Field</i>	452

Resolution agreed to.

8. £271,200, Miscellaneous Effective Services.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £267,100, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of the Admiralty Office, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

<i>Mr. Edmund Robertson</i>	452
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Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

9. £786,700, Half-Pay, Reserved, and Retired Pay.

<i>Admiral Field</i>	453
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Resolution agreed to.

10. £1,123,600, Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate Allowances.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Kearley</i>	453	<i>Mr. Austen Chamberlain</i> ...	457
<i>Captain Phillpotts</i>	456		

Resolution agreed to.

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11. £343,500. Civil Pensions and Gratuities.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made and question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £60,300 be granted to Her Majesty to defray the expense necessary to be provided for under the arrangement made between the Imperial and Australasian Governments for the protection of floating trade in Australasian waters, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Mr. William Redmond 462

It being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow.

Committee also report progress ; to sit again to-morrow.

Coal Mines (Prohibition of Child Labour Underground) Bill—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Jesse Collings, Birmingham, Bordesley)

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—On the motion for the adjournment of the House—Questions, Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.), Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.), Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston), and Sir F. S. Powell (Wigan); Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 463

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve of the clock.

LORDS : FRIDAY, 9TH MARCH, 1900.

VISCOUNT GORT—Petition of John Gage Prendergast, Viscount Gort, claiming a right to vote at the elections of representative Peers for Ireland ; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House 465

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Gwyrfai Rural District Council Water Bill [H.L.]—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Order made on the 27th of February last discharged, and Bill committed 465

Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L.]—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Order made on the 2nd instant discharged, and Bill committed 465

Birmingham University Bill [H.L.]—Committed. 465

South Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.]; Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill [H.L.]—Committed: The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 465

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Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [H.L.]; Edinburgh Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Rotherhithe and Ratchiff Tunnel Bill [H.L.]; London Sea Water Supply Bill [H.L.]; Sunderland Corporation Bill [H.L.]; North Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; North Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Falmouth be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Muncaster; read, and agreed to	465
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RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—No. 2387. Havre and District...	466
BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS, AND VACCINATION (SCOTLAND)—Forty-fifth Annual Report by the Registrar-General in Scotland, for the year 1899; and Thirty-fifth Annual Report on Vaccination. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table	466
LUNACY—Return of all sums received by the visitors of lunatics for travelling expenses or upon any other account from the first January to the 31st December, 1899	466
INEBRIATES ACT, 1898—Regulations for certified inebriate reformatories in Scotland. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table	466

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord Kinnaird</i>	466	<i>The Earl of Portsmouth</i>	471
<i>The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury</i>	466		

Public Libraries Bill [H.L.]—Second Reading—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord Windsor</i>	472	<i>The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury)</i>	474
<i>Lord Harris</i>	474		

Bill read a second time (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY ARBITRATION—Question, Lord Wenlock; Answer, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury)

474

Militia Ballot Bill [H.L.]—Introduction, The Earl of Wemyss

476

A Bill to amend the law relating to the ballot for the Militia in England and Wales—Was presented by the Lord Wemyss (E. Wemyss); read the first time; and to be printed. (No. 23.)

477

Midwives Bill [H.L.]—A Bill to secure the better training of midwives, and to regulate their practice—Was presented by the Lord Glenesk; read the first time; to be printed; and to read a second time on Tuesday next. (No. 24.)

477

The House adjourned at Twenty minutes past Five of the clock.

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COMMONS: FRIDAY, 9TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH)—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill referred on the first Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely—Bray and Enniskerry Railway Bill—Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time 477

PETITIONS.

Boilers Registration and Inspection Bill—Petition from Leeds, against; to lie upon the Table ... 477

Ecclesiastical Assessment (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 477

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petitions in favour, from Twrcelyn; Stratford-on-Avon; and Menai Bridge; to lie upon the Table ... 478

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Rockingham; and Grange Moor; to lie upon the Table ... 478

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petition from Streatham Hill, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 478

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Question put, and agreed to.		
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SUPPLY [8th March] REPORT—Resolutions reported :

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DISCUSSION :—

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Resolution agreed to.

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3. "That a sum, not exceeding £13,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Martial Law, including the cost of Naval Prisons at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

4. "That a sum not exceeding £92,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Educational Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £66,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Scientific Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £271,100, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of the Royal Naval Reserve, and the Retired Officers and Seamen Pensioner Reserve, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £3,004,700, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Naval Armaments, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

8. "That a sum, not exceeding £271,200, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Expense of various Miscellaneous Effective Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

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9. "That a sum, not exceeding £786,700, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Expense of Half Pay, Reserved, and Retired Pay to Officers of the Navy and Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 516

Resolution agreed to.

10. "That a sum, not exceeding £1,123,600, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Expense of Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate Allowances, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

11. "That a sum, not exceeding £343,500, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Expense of Civil Pensions and Gratuities, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Resolutions agreed to.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—SECOND READING—
Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Souttar.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*The First Lord of the Admiralty.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Asquith (Fifeshire, E.)</i>	518	<i>Sir H. Campbell - Bannerman</i> (<i>Stirling Burghs</i>)	524
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<i>Sir William Houldsworth</i> (<i>Manchester, N.W.</i>)	522	<i>Mr. Banbury (Camberwell,</i> <i>Peckham)</i>	528
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		<i>Mr. A. J. Balfour</i>	529

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original motion again proposed.

DISCUSSION—

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<i>Mr. Middlemore (Birming-</i> <i>ham, N.)</i>	530	<i>Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.)</i>	532
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		<i>Mr. John Burns (Battersea)</i>	533
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Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

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Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(*Mr. Souttar.*)

DISCUSSION—

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<i>Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.)</i> ...	534	<i>Bridgeton)</i> ...	535
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Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

MIDWIVES BILL [Second Reading]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. J. H. Johnstone.*)

DISCUSSION—

<i>Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.)</i>	536	<i>Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.)</i> ...	537
<i>Mr. T. P. O'Connor (Liverpool, Scotland)</i> ...	537		

Motion made, and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 56 ; Noes, 127. (Division List No. 62.)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Vicary Gibbs (Hertfordshire, St. Albans)</i> ...	541	<i>Dr. Tanner (Cork County, Mid)</i> ...	541
		<i>Mr. Hazell (Leicester)</i> ...	542

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 124 ; Noes, 34. (Division List No. 63.)

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Adjourned at a quarter before Eight of the clock till Monday.

LORDS: MONDAY, 12TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Mersey Railway [H.L.]. Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Plymouth, Stonehouse, and Devonport Tramways. And also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—Glasgow District Tramways ; London County Tramways (No. 1) ; the same was ordered to lie on the Table ... 545

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE—Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Christchurch, Bournemouth, and Winton Tramways Bill ought to be dispensed with, provided that Sections I. and III. of the tramways proposed to be authorised by the Bill be struck out. That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Muirkirk

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Mauchline, and Dalmellington Railways (Abandonment) Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with and the Bill allowed to proceed. That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that proof be given before the Examiners that the Bill has been submitted to meetings of the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Company and of the Metropolitan District Railway Company, convened in accordance with Standing Order No. 62, before the Third Reading of the Bill 546

Read and agreed to.

Great Berkhamstead Water Bill [H.L.]—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 2nd instant and Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed 546

Aston Manor Tramways Bill [H.L.]—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 23rd of February and Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed 546

Cardiff Corporation Bill [H.L.]—The Chairman of Committees informed the House, That the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with 546

Birmingham (King Edward the Sixth) Schools Bill [H.L.]; Muirkirk, Mauchline, and Dalmellington Railways (Abandonment Bill) [H.L.]; Cork Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Read the second time (according to order) 546

Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [H.L.]; Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society Bill [H.L.]; Read the third time, and passed, and sent to the Commons 546

St. David's Railway Abandonment Bill—The order of Tuesday last, referring the examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders to the Standing Orders Committee, discharged 546

Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills—Ordered—That no Private Bills brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 26th day of June next.

That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill originating in this House shall be read a first time after Tuesday the 1st day of May next.

That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 26th day of June next.

That when a Bill shall be passed with Amendments these orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended.

That this House will not receive any Petition for a Private Bill later than Tuesday the 1st day of May next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the High Court of Justice, nor any Petition for a Private Bill approved by the High Court of Justice, after Friday the 11th day of May next.

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That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon Petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after Friday the 11th day of May next.

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BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND)—Return of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland and the local courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1899; laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table ... 547

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Lord Monkswell ... 555

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Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3 :—

Lord Reay ... 560

Clause 3 agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

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CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA—Return showing the names of Members of either House of Parliament at the present serving, or under orders to serve, Her Majesty in South Africa, the capacity in which they serve and the dates at which they sailed or are under orders to sail—Address for (*The Lord Windsor*) ... 561

Trawlers' Certificates Suspension Bill [H.L.]—A Bill to enable courts to suspend the certificates of trawlers convicted of illegal trawling; was presented by the Earl of Camperdown; read first time; and to be printed. (No. 26) ... 561

Public Libraries Bill [H.L.]—House to be in Committee on Monday next.

House adjourned at twenty minutes past Five of the clock.

COMMONS: MONDAY, 12TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [H.L.] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH)—**MR. SPEAKER** laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following case, viz :—**Glasgow District Tramways** ... 561

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [H.L.] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH)—**MR. SPEAKER** laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz :—**Glasgow District Tramways Bill**. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders ... 562

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH)—**MR. SPEAKER** laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz :—**London County Tramways (No. 1) Bill**, Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders ... 562

Rugeley Gas Bill—As amended, considered; to be read the third time ... 562

Latimer Road and Acton Railway Bill—**London and North-Western Railway Bill**; **London and North-Western Railway (Wales) Bill**; **Midland Railway Bill**; **Newry, Keady, and Tynan Light Railway Bill**; Read a second time, and committed ... 562

WOLVERHAMPTON GAS BILL—Read a second time, and committed ... 562

HOYLAKES AND WEST KIRBY IMPROVEMENT BILL (BY ORDER). [Second Reading]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

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Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘upon this day six months.’”—(*Sir John Brunner.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question.”

Mr. Macdona (Rotherhithe) 564 *Col. E. T. D. Cotton-Jodrell (Cheshire, Wirral)* ... 565

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

SOUTH-EASTERN METROPOLITAN TRAMWAYS BILL (BY ORDER)—Read a second time, and committed.

Motion made, and Question, “That it be an Instruction to the Committee to consider whether it is desirable to insert a clause in the Bill amending the provisions for cheap fares for the labouring classes in the company’s original Act by the insertion of penalties to secure the object of the provisions in respect of the number of cars to be run, the hours at which the cars shall run, and the maximum and minimum fares charged.”—(*Mr. Lough.*) ... 566

Put, and agreed to.

PLYMOUTH, STONEHOUSE, AND DEVONPORT TRAMWAYS—Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Asquith and Mr. Kimber. ... 567

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Liquor Traffic Local Veto Bill—Petition from Streatham Hill, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 567

Local Authorities Officers’ Superannuation Bill—Petitions in favour, from Wirral; and Bethesda; to lie upon the Table... 567

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour, from Bedwelty (two); Reading; Tredegar; Nantyglo; Blaina; and Berkshire; to lie upon the Table ... 567

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petition from Northwich, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 567

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petition in favour, from West Hartlepool (two); Abertillery (three); Aberbeag (three); London (two); Varteg Hill (four); Northwich; Varteg; Manchester; Southampton; Tredegar; Guisborough; Hartlepool; Garndiffaith (two); Reading; Llanhilleth; Bedwelty; Sneinton; Nottingham; Abergavenny; Berkshire; Coventry (three); and Beaufort; to lie upon the Table ... 567

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NEW BILLS.

CENSUS (IRELAND)

<i>The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry)</i>	<i>Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny)</i> 598
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Bill for taking the Census for Ireland in the year one thousand nine hundred and one, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General for Ireland and Mr. Gerald Balfour.

Census (Ireland) Bill—"For taking the Census for Ireland in the year one thousand nine hundred and one," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 120.] ... 598

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS.

<i>The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Long, Liverpool, West Derby) ...</i>	<i>Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) ...</i>	599	600
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AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS—Bill to amend the Law relating to Agricultural Holdings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long, Mr. Solicitor General, and the Lord Advocate.

Agricultural Holdings Bill —"To amend the Law relating to Agricultural Holdings," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 121] ...	601
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SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES—Order for Committee read.

<i>The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) ...</i>	602
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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Chas. Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) ...</i>	625	<i>Major Rasch (Essex, S.E.) ...</i>	643
<i>Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.) ...</i>	632	<i>Mr. Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) ...</i>	646
<i>Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.) ...</i>	636	<i>Sir Henry Fletcher (Sussex, Lewes) ...</i>	650
		<i>Major Jameson (Clare, W.) ...</i>	652

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (Dr. TANNER, Cork County, Mid). House counted, and forty Members being found present,

<i>Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford) ...</i>	655	<i>Sir John Colomb (Gt. Yarmouth) ...</i>	662
<i>Mr. Cawley (Lancs., Prestwich) ...</i>	657	<i>Mr. Seton-Karr (St. Helens) ...</i>	665
<i>Col. Blundell (Lancs., Ince) ...</i>	657	<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) ...</i>	669
<i>Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire) ...</i>	658	<i>Gen. Russell (Cheltenham) ...</i>	674
		<i>Mr. Wyndham ...</i>	678

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY—Considered in Committee [Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith,) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 430,000, all ranks, be maintained for the service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

DISCUSSION—

<i>Mr. Arnold Forster (Belfast, W.) ...</i>	678	<i>Col. Milward (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon) ...</i>	691
<i>Mr. Hedderwick (Wick Burghs) ...</i>	689	<i>Col. Pilkington (Lancs, Newton) ...</i>	694

It being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

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SUPPLY [9TH MARCH]—Resolutions reported :—

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES), 1899-1900.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £47,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge for the Ordnance Factories (the cost of the Productions of which will be charged to the Army, Navy, and Indian and Colonial Governments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900."

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £60,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense necessary to be provided for under the Arrangement made between the Imperial and Australasian Governments, for the protection of Floating Trade in Australasian Waters, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901." 696

Resolutions agreed to.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL—Considered in Committee. Clause 1—Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next 696

RIFLE RANGES—Address for "Return showing how many purchases of land for the purpose of forming rifle ranges have been made by County or Borough Councils or Volunteer Corps, under the provisions of 54 and 55 Vic., c. 54 (The Ranges Act, 1891), and where the lands so acquired are respectively situated."—(*Mr Radcliffe Cooke*) 696

LORDS: TUESDAY, 13TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with: Hammond (G.H.) Company [H.L.]. The same was ordered to lie on the Table 697

Army and Navy Investment Trust Bill [H.L.]; New Russia Company Bill [H.L.]—Committed 697

Donegal Railway Bill [H.L.]—Committed for Friday next 697

Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramroads Bill [H.L.]—Committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 697

Lancashire Inebriates Acts Board Bill [H.L.]—Committee to meet on Friday next 697

Ipswich Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Lincoln Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bills, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; the orders made on the 23rd of February, and Tuesday last discharged; and Bills committed 697

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Falkirk Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; the orders made on the 23rd of February and Tuesday last discharged; and Bill committed	697
Dundee Harbour Bill [H.L.]—Reported with Amendments	698
Purfleet and Gravesend Junction Railway Bill [H.L.]—Read second time (according to order)	698
London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.]; Glyncorrwg Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cleethorpes Gas Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Mountain Ash Water Bill [H.L.]; Cowes Pier Bill [H.L.]; Paignton Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Exmouth and District Water Bill [H.L.]; Exmouth and District Water Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills (namely):—E. Stamford, V. Templetown, L. Elgin (E. Elgin and Kincardine) (chairman), L. Napier, L. Somerton (E. Normanton); agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Wednesday, the 21st instant, at Eleven o'clock; and all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills	698
St. David's Railway (Abandonment) Bill ; Dublin Electric Lighting Bill; Blackpool, St. Anne's and Lytham Tramways Bill. Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next... ..	698

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

AFRICA, No. 2 (1900) —Correspondence with the Presidents of the South African Republic and of the Orange Free State respecting the war. Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table	699
LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHs) —Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of each of the undermentioned Metropolitan Boroughs and incorporating the Council thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith:—Battersea, Bermondsey, Bethnal Green, Deptford, Fulham, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith, Hampstead, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Poplar, St. Marylebone, Shoreditch, Southwark, Stoke Newington, Wandsworth, and Woolwich. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 27.)	699
YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL [H.L.]—Petition against; of superintendent and teachers of the Congregational Sunday-school, Eccles; read, and ordered to lie on the Table	699

NEW BILL.

Palatine Court of Durham Bill [H.L.]—A Bill to amend the law relating to the Court of Chancery of the County Palatine of Durham was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read first time; and to be printed. (No. 28.) ...	699
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Money Lending Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Standing Committee with amendments: The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 29.) ... 699

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—OVERTURES BY THE REPUBLICS FOR PEACE— Question, The Earl of Kimberley; Answer, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) ... 699

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five of the Clock.

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 13TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS 62 AND 63 COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Orders Nos. 62 and 63 have been complied with, viz.:—Metropolitan Water Companies Bill.
Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time ... 702

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.:—Christchurch, Bournemouth, and Winton Tramways Bill.
Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time ... 702

Pontefract Park Bill—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 702

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill—Read a second time and committed 702

Huntingdon Corporation Bill (BY ORDER)—Order for second reading read.

Motion made; and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'This House is not prepared to consider a proposal for the inclosure of Common Lands except when recommended by the Board of Agriculture, in accordance with the procedure and on the principles laid down by the Enclosure Acts.'"—(*Mr. Kearley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir John Brunner (Cheshire, Northwich)</i> ... 706	<i>Sir W. Hart-Dyke (Kent, Dartford)</i> 711
<i>Mr. Smith Barry (Huntingdonshire, Huntingdon)</i> ... 707	<i>Mr. Haldane (Haddington)</i> ... 712
<i>Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.)</i> ... 710	<i>Mr. Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield)</i> ... 713

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Haldane.*)

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Long, Liverpool, West Derby) ...</i>	713	<i>Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) ...</i>	715
<i>Sir John Brunner ...</i>	714	<i>Sir W. Hart-Dyke ...</i>	715
		<i>Mr. Long ...</i>	716

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 143 ; Noes, 149. (Division List No. 64.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House is not prepared to consider a proposal for the enclosure of common lands except when recommended by the Board of Agriculture, in accordance with the procedure and on the principles laid down by the Enclosure Acts.

East London Water Bill (By Order)—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read a second time.”

<i>Mr. Stuart (Shoreditch, Hoxton) ...</i>	719	<i>The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chaplin, Lincs, Sleaford) ...</i>	719
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Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Lambeth Water Bill (By Order)—Read a second time, and committed.

METROPOLITAN COMMON SCHEME (PETERSHAM) PROVISIONAL ORDER—Bill to confirm a Scheme relating to Petersham Common, in the parish of Petersham and borough of Richmond, in the county of Surrey, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Hanbury.

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Petersham) Provisional Order Bill—“To confirm a Scheme relating to Petersham Common, in the Parish of Petersham and Borough of Richmond, in the county of Surrey,” presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 122] ... 720

Plymouth, Stonehouse, and Devonport Tramways Bill—“To confer further powers upon the Plymouth, Stonehouse, and Devonport Tramways Company ; to amend the Acts relating to that company ; and for other purposes,” read the first time ; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 721

Brighton Corporation Bill—Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Brighton Corporation (Water) Bill, in the Session of 1896, be referred to the Committee on the Brighton Corporation Bill.—(*Dr. Farquharson*) ... 721

STANDING ORDERS—Resolutions reported from the Committee :—1. That, in the case of the Barnsley Corporation Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with :—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that Clauses 17–47, relating to Tramways, be struck out of the Bill :—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with.”

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2. "That, in the case of the Bray and Enniskerry Railway Bill, Petition of the 'Wicklow County Council' for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of their Petition against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the London and South-Western Railway Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision, if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

4. "That, in the case of the St. David's Railway (Abandonment) Petition, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill." Resolutions agreed to ... 721

STANDING ORDERS—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Select Committee on Standing Orders, That they had agreed to the following Resolution:—
"That in the case of the Special Report of the Examiner on the Great Grimsby Street Tramways Bill [Lords], referred to them by Order of the House of the 26th February, 1900, they are of opinion that the Standing Orders have been complied with." Report to lie upon the Table... 722

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to explain, vary, or alter the Deed of Settlement of the Universal Life Assurance Society; and for other purposes." Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords]. And, also a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society and the directors thereof; to amend the Acts relating to the Society; and for other purposes." Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords] ... 722

Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords]; Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 722

PETITIONS.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petitions against; from Aberdeen; and Kirkcaldy; to lie upon the Table ... 722

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY (EXEMPTION FROM RATES)—Petition from Poplar, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table ... 722

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Dundee, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 722

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petitions, in favour; from Great Crosby; Llandaff; and Dinas Powis; to lie upon the Table ... 723

Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment Bill—Petition from Dundee, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 723

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Garforth; Shireoaks; Halton; Micklefield; and Bowers; to lie upon the Table ... 723

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petition in favour, from Hertford; and Leeds; to lie upon the Table ... 723

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour; from Great Dalby; Pollokshaws (two); Sunday School Union; Birmingham; Glasgow; and Dundee; to lie upon the Table ... 723

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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Petition from Streatham Hill, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 723

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill and Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour, from Newton Abbot; Ashburton; and Teignmouth; to lie upon the Table ... 723

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Uxbridge; Norwich; Ryde; Heanor; Bath; Rushden; John Duncan; Walkley; Kettering; London (three); Marlpool; Langley; Malton; Hertfordshire; Darlington; Fulham (two); Deptford; Strand; Stratford; West London; Kennington; Clacton-on-Sea; Colchester; Sheffield; Langley Mill; Kilburn; Ossett; Morley; Abergavenny; Cwmbran (two); Gloucester; Llanhilleth (two); Woodford Green; Oldham; Lightcliffe; Darwen (two); Hyde; Risca; Edinburgh; Upper Cwmbran; Llanvrechva Upper; Silvertown; Canning Town; Plaistow; Bedwelty; Darlington; Abercarn (two); Limehouse; South Monmouth; Newbridge; Rogerstone; Crosskeys; Penmain; and Aberyschan; to lie upon the Table ... 723

Town Councils (Scotland) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Nairn; and Newport; to lie upon the Table ... 724

WATER SUPPLY (METROPOLIS) (RECOMMENDATIONS OF ROYAL COMMISSION)—Petition from West Ham, for legislation; to lie upon the Table ... 724

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS—Return [presented 12th March] to be printed. [No. 94.] ... 724

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHES)—Copy presented, of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of each of the undermentioned Metropolitan Boroughs, and incorporating the Council thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith; Battersea, Bermondsey, Bethnal Green, Deptford, Fulham, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith, Hampstead, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Poplar, St. Marylebone, Shoreditch, Southwark, Stoke Newington, Wandsworth, and Woolwich [by Act]; to lie upon the Table ... 724

FINANCE ACT, 1894—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 24th October, 1899, appointing a Committee to examine into the operation of Section 4 of the Finance Act, 1894, and other matters, and of the Report of the Committee dated February, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 724

AFRICA (No. 2, 1900)—Copy presented, of Correspondence with the Presidents of the South African Republic and of the Orange Free State respecting the war [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 724

TAXES AND IMPOSTS—Return ordered, "Showing (1) the Rates of Duties, Taxes, or Imposts collected by Imperial Officers; (2) the Quantities or Amounts taxed; (3) the Gross Receipts derived from each Duty; and (4) the net Receipts and appropriation thereof in the year ending the 31st day of March, 1900; and (1) the aggregate Gross Receipts derived from all such Duties, Taxes, or Imposts under the principal heads of revenue; (2) the aggregate net Receipts; (3) the Charges of Collection; and (4) the Produce, after deducting these Charges, in each of the ten years ending the 31st day of March, 1900." "And Notes to show any changes in the Taxes, Duties, and Imposts consequent upon the acceptance of the Budget Proposals of 1900 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 321, of Session 1899)"—(*Mr. Goldard*)... 724

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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure:—Sir Charles Dilke; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Lloyd-George.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee, That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, the following Fifteen Members in respect of the Midwives Bill:—Dr. Ambrose, Mr. Bonsor, Mr. Flower, Mr. Vicary Gibbs, Mr. Hazell, Mr. Howard, Mr. Humphreys-Owen, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Sir Powlett Milbank, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Sir George Pilkington, Mr. Schwann, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Thornton, and Mr. Tritton.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Mr. Lloyd-George; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Charles Dilke. Reports to lie upon the Table 725

STANDING COMMITTEE (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL)—Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR reported from the Chairmen's Panel, That they had appointed Mr. Laurence Hardy to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure. Report to lie upon the Table 725

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—OVERTURES BY THE REPUBLICS FOR PEACE—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 726

STORMBERG AND MAGERSFONTEIN ENGAGEMENTS—OFFICIAL DESPATCHES—Questions Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs), and Major Rasch (Essex, S.E.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.) 726

ALLEGED OFFER OF SURRENDER BY 3,000 BOERS—Question, Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon); Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 727

WIRE CUTTERS—Question, Mr. Nussey (Pontefract); Mr. J. Powell-Williams 727

LONDON SCOTTISH VOLUNTEER CORPS' ACCOUNTS—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 727

LEE-ENFIELD RIFLES—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 728

VOLUNTEER MOUNTED INFANTRY — CAPITATION GRANT — Question, Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.); Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 728

REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL FOR RECRUITING—Question, Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire); Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 728

VACCINATION IN THE ARMY—CASE OF JOSEPH DONOVAN, KING'S OWN YORKSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY — Question, Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield); Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 729

ESTIMATED MILITARY AND NAVAL EXPENDITURE FOR 1900—Question, Sir Chas. Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.) 729

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POLITICAL PENSIONS—Questions, Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield), and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answers, Sir M. Hicks-Beach	730
SOLDIERS' ESTATES AND THE DEATH DUTIES—Question, General Russell (Cheltenham); Answer, Sir M. Hicks-Beach	730
ADMIRALTY CONTRACTS—SHIPBUILDING—Question, Mr. H. S. Foster (Suffolk, Lowestoft); Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square)	731
PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD LABOURERS—BACK PAY—Question, Sir John Baker (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Goschen	731
INDIAN SIEGE BATTERIES—Question, Mr. Arnold-Forster (Belfast, W.); Answer, the Secretary of State for India (Lord G. Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing)...	732
CHIEF PRESIDENCY MAGISTRATES OF MADRAS—Question, Mr. Lloyd Morgan (Carmarthenshire, W.); Answer, Lord George Hamilton	733
PACIFIC CABLE SCHEME—CONCESSIONS TO THE EASTERN TELEGRAPH COMPANY—Question, Sir Edward Sassoon (Hythe); Answer, the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.)	734
BRITISH HONDURAS RAILWAY—Question, Sir Charles Dilke; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain	734
CORPORATION AND DISTRICT COUNCIL STOCKS—Question, Mr. Nussey; Answer, Sir M. Hicks-Beach	734
DELAGOA BAY ARBITRATION—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton (Canterbury); Answer, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford)	735
UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ABROAD—Question, Mr. Arthur Moore (London-derry); Answer, Mr. Brodrick	735
FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE REGULATIONS—Questions, Mr. Soames (Norfolk, S.) and Mr. H. S. Foster (Suffolk, Lowestoft); Answer, the President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Long, Liverpool, West Derby)	735
ETON UNION WORKHOUSE—FATALITY TO A CHILD—Question, Sir Joseph Savory (Westmoreland, Appleby); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford)	737
FRASERBURG AND ST. COMBS LIGHT RAILWAY—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.)—Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon)	738
SMALL HOLDINGS IN ROSS-SHIRE—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire)	738
LIGHTHOUSES ON THE SCOTTISH COAST—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray	738
SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray	739
PUBLIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGE—Question, Mr. Crilly (Mayo, N.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury Preston)	740

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SALE OF DRINK AT THE HOUSE—Question, Sir Wilfred Lawson (Cumberland, Cockermouth); Answer, General Goldsworthy (Hammersmith)	742
MARLBOROUGH STREET TRAINING COLLEGE, DUBLIN—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Glamorganshire, Rhondda); Answer The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.)	743
MURDER OF HUGH THOMPSON IN FERMANAGH—Questions, Mr. Archdale (Fermanagh, W.) and Capt. Donelan (Cork, E.); Answers, Mr. Atkinson	744
LOAN FUND BANKS—Question, Mr. Macaleese (Monaghan, N.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson	744
RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH—DISTURBANCES DIRECTED AGAINST OPPONENTS OF THE WAR—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour	745

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

NEW BILLS.

COLONIAL SOLICITORS—Bill to provide for the admission of Solicitors of Courts of British Possessions to the Supreme Courts in the United Kingdom, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hedderwick, Sir James Woodhouse, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Warr, Mr. Helder, Mr. Lloyd-George, and Mr. Schwann.	
Colonial Solicitors Bill —"To provide for the admission of Solicitors of Courts of British Possessions to the Supreme Courts in the United Kingdom," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 123.]	745
RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION—Bill to make more effectual provision for preventing the pollution of rivers and streams, ordered to be brought in by Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Wilson-Todd, Mr. Hobhouse, Sir John Dorington, Sir Henry Howorth, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Brigg, Sir John Brunner, and Sir Walter Foster.	
Rivers Pollution Prevention Bill —"To make more effectual provision for preventing the pollution of rivers and streams," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday 2nd April, and to be printed. [Bill 124]	745

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War Loan Bill [Second Reading.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That that the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Power (Waterford, E.)</i>	753	<i>Mr. David MacIver (Liverpool, Kirkdale)</i>	...	...	765
<i>Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.)</i>	...	<i>The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.)</i>	...	...	766
<i>Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.)</i>	758	<i>Sir William Harcourt (Monmouthshire, W.)</i>	...	...	769
<i>Mr. Labouchere (Northampton)</i>	759	<i>Sir Wilfred Lawson (Cumberland, Cocker-mouth)</i>	...	...	772
<i>Mr. Vicary Gibbs (Herefordshire)</i>	...				
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i>	...				
	762				
	763				

Question put.

The House divided: -Ayes, 268 ; Noes, 21. (Division List No. 65.)

Bill read a second time and committed for to-morrow.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES (EXCESS), 1898-9.

1. £10, Prisons (England and the Colonies).

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

2. 430,000, Number of Land Forces.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Col. Welby (Taunton)</i>	...	775	<i>Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire)</i>	...	793
<i>Mr. Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield)</i>	...	781	<i>Sir A. Arlun-Hood (Somersetshire, Wellington)</i>	...	802
<i>Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.)</i>	...	782	<i>The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)</i>	...	806
<i>Mr. Warner</i>	...	783	<i>Sir Brampton Gordon (Norfolk, N.)</i>	...	814
<i>Capt. Jessel (St. Pancras, S.)</i>	...	784	<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	...	815
<i>Mr. Buchanan</i>	...	790	<i>Sir John Colomb (Gt. Yarmouth)</i>	...	816

Resolution agreed to.

3. £15,200,000, Pay, etc., of the Army (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments).

Resolutions to be reported.

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £555,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of the Medical Establishment, and for Medicines, etc., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Dr. Tanner (Cork County, Mil.) 819

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow.

Committee also report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve of the clock.

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 14TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bray and Enniskerry Railway Bill—Read a second time, and committed 821

ST. DAVID'S RAILWAY (ABANDONMENT)—Report [13th March] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read. Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Phillips, General Laurie, and Mr. Randell 821

PETITIONS.

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill—Petition from London, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 821

(GOVERNMENT PROPERTY (EXEMPTION FROM THE RATES))—Petition of the Metropolitan Overseers and Assessment Committee, for alteration of Law ; to lie upon the Table 821

Liquor Traffic Local Veto Bill—Petition from Dunfermline, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 821

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petition from Wimbledon, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 821

Roman Catholic Disabilities Removal Bill—Petition of the Scottish Women's Protestant Union, against ; to lie upon the Table 821

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petition from Ecclesall, for alteration ; to lie upon the Table. Petitions in favour, from St. Helens ; Buckinghamshire ; Pontypool ; Newport ; Ipswich ; and Middlesex ; to lie upon the Table 822

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Wandsworth ; Colne (four) ; Folkestone ; York ; Hulme ; Yorkshire ; Blackburn ; National Temperance Federation ; and Salford ; to lie upon the Table 822

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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Petition from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 822

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions against, from Newport (two); South Monmouth; and Western Division of Monmouthshire (two); to lie upon the Table 822

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Camborne; Parkgate; Colne (six); Golborne (eight); Wigan; Abertillery; Plymouth; Holloway; Blaina; Cardiff (two); Buckinghamshire; Barnsley; Maesycwmmer; Sandown; Folkestone; Ashton-under-Lyne; Meopham (two); Sheffield (four); Leeds; Long Eaton (six); Coventry (five); Bedwas Lower; Varteg Hill; Ratcliff; Padiham; Hereford; Bewdley; Kensal; Bideford; Manchester (two) Bradford (three); Salford (three); Glossop; Southgate; Highgate; Hartlepool, Pendleton; Beaufort (ten); London (five); Vernon, Newport (thirteen); Pontypool (five); East Brecknock; Kington Magna; Huddersfield (three); Hendon; Pengam; Harpurley, Hunstanton; Sunderland; Carlinghow; Redcar; Guisborough; National Temperance Federation; Plaistow (two); Ipswich (three); Clevedon; Handsworth; Silvertown; Whitechapel; Blackwood (six); Bedwellty; Polaenavon; Chepstow (three); Maesycwmmer; Rogerstone; Grimsby (two); Kentish Town; Seven Dials; Rawtenstall; St. Albans; Kilburn; Tottenham; Abersychan; Trinant; Blaenavon (two); Abergavenny; Portskewett; Taunton; Monmouth (three); Usk (two); Northfleet; Wakefield; Waltham; Streatham Hill; Ripon (five); Staines; Gravesend; Ebbw Vale; Blaina; Erdington; Risca; Didcot; Birmingham; Bridgwater; Wrexham; Chelmsford; Hayle; Holloway; Martock; Oldham; East Ham; Barking; Warrington; Bewdley; Wunllwyd (three); Victoria (two); Chorley; Malvern Link; Street; Newcastle-under-Lyne; King's Cross; Marlborough; Chelsea; and North-East Lancashire; to lie upon the Table 822

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) and Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Three Petitions from Sandiacre, in favour; to lie upon the Table 823

VACCINATION ACTS—Petition from Wandsworth and Clapham, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 823

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHES)—Paper [presented 13th March] to be printed. [No. 95] 823

AMERICAN MAILS—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 13th February; *Sir John Leng*]; to lie upon the Table 823

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Spicer.*)

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Howell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>Col. Morgan (Monmouthshire, S.)</i>	842	<i>Mr. Whittaker (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley)</i>	867
<i>Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.)</i>	843	<i>Mr. Tritton (Lambeth, Norwood)</i> ...	871
<i>Sir John Kennaway (Devonshire, Honiton)</i>	847	<i>Mr. Charles Morley (Brecknockshire)</i> ...	875
<i>Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.)</i>	849	<i>Capt. Phillpotts (Devonshire, Torquay)</i>	876
<i>Mr. Maclean (Cardiff)</i>	851	<i>Admiral Field (Sussex, Eastbourne)</i>	878
<i>Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs)</i>	857	<i>Sir William Harcourt (Monmouthshire, W.)</i>	879
<i>Mr. Orr-Ewing (Ayr Burghs)</i>	861	<i>The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White)</i>	
<i>Major Jameson (Clare, W.)</i>	863	<i>Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool)</i>	884
<i>Mr. Malcolm, (Suffolk, Stowmarket)</i>	865	<i>Sir J. Leng (Dundee)</i>	887

The House divided :—Ayes, 188 ; Noes, 124. (Division List No. 66.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Local Government (Scotland) Bill (Second Reading)—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Nicoll.*)

The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire)... .. 891

It being half-past Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

Highways and Bridges Act (1891) Amendment Bill—Read a second time, and committed for Wednesday next... .. 892

War Loan Bill—Considered in Committee, and reported ; without Amendment ; to be read the third time to-morrow... .. 892

Ossett Gas Bill—Reported [Parties do not proceed] ; Report to lie upon the Table 892

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—On the Motion for Adjournment, Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) ; Answer, The Patronage Secretary to the Treasury (Sir William Walrond, Devonshire, Tiverton) 892

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six of the clock.

LORDS : THURSDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Crystal Palace Company [H.L.]. And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—Central London Railway ; the same were ordered to lie on the Table 893

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Glasgow District Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Presented and read first time ...	893
Bournemouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Report of Her Majesty's Attorney General Received, and ordered to lie on the Table	893
Hemel Hempstead Corporation (Water) Bill [H.L.]—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee	893
Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [H.L.]—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee... ..	893
Cowes Pier Bill [H.L.]—Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee...	893
Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [H.L.]—Edinburgh Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Rotherhithe and Ratcliff Tunnel Bill [H.L.]; London Sea Water Supply Bill [H.L.]; Sunderland Corporation Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl Brownlow be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Avebury, and that the Earl Brownlow be chairman of the said Committee; read, and agreed to	893
Newport (Monmouthshire) Gas Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 2nd and 6th instant discharged; and Bill committed for Tuesday next	894
Barnsley Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection	894
Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust, Limited, Bill [H.L.]—Committed	894
Blackpool, St. Anne's, and Lytham Tramways Bill —The order of Tuesday last, referring the Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders to the Standing Orders Committee, discharged ...	894
Menstone Water (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]; East Stirlingshire Water Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments	894
Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill [H.L.]—Read second time	894
Mersey Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Grimsby Street Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Leigh Burgh Provisional Order Bill [H.L.]—Read second time (according to order)	894

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

EMIGRATION —Reports on the Emigrants Information Office, for the year ended December 31st, 1899. Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table	894
LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES —Statements of account and of life assurance and annuity business, and abstracts of actuarial reports, deposited with the Board of Trade under "The Life Assurance Companies Act, 1870," during the year ended 31st December 1899: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table	895

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Inebriates Amendments (Scotland) Bill [H.L.]—Petition for amendment of; of Lord Provost of Dundee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table ...	895
Money Lending Bill [H.L.]—Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read a third time on Thursday next... ..	895
SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—BOER TREATMENT OF COLONIAL PRISONERS—Question, The Earl of Camperdown; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (The Marquess of Lansdowne)	895
TELEGRAMS TO SOLDIERS ON SERVICE—Question, The Earl of Lichfield; Answer, The Marquess of Lansdowne	896
MILITIA RECRUITS SENT TO SOUTH AFRICA—MUSKETRY TRAINING—Question, The Duke of Bedford; Answer, The Marquess of Lansdowne ...	896
MILITIA EQUIPMENT—Question, Lord Blythswood; Answer, The Marquess of Lansdowne	897

House adjourned at a quarter before Five of the clock.

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Central London Railway—Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders	899
Rugeley Gas Bill —Read the third time, and passed	899
St. David's Railway (Abandonment) Bill —"For the abandonment of the St. David's Railway; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitioners for Private Bills... ..	899
CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY —Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders	899
Electric Power Bills (By Order) —Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding Seven Members, to whom shall be committed the following Private Bills by which it is proposed to supply electric power :—Lancashire Electric Power Bill; Durham (County of) Electric Power Supply Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill; Tyneside Electric Power Bill; (read a second time on Thursday, 1st March)."—(<i>Lord Balcarras</i> .)	

DISCUSSION—

<i>Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.)</i> ...	900	<i>Sir F. S. Powell (Wigan)</i> ...	901
<i>Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.)</i> ...	901	<i>The Patronage Secretary to the Treasury (Sir William Warland, Devonshire, Tiverton)</i> ...	902
<i>Mr. Monk (Gloucester)</i> ...	901		

Debate adjourned till to-morrow.

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Hamilton Burgh Bill —Reported, with Amendments ; Report to lie upon the Table	902
Southport Extension and Tramways Bill —Reported, with amendments ; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	902

PETITIONS.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill —Petitions in favour, from King's Lynn (two) ; West Lynn ; and Wolverhampton ; to lie upon the Table	902
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill —Petitions in favour, from Patricxbourne ; Stanford ; Wolverhampton ; Glasgow ; and Eccles ; to lie upon the Table	902
Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill —Petitions against, from Blaenavon ; and North Monmouthshire (two) ; to lie upon the Table	902
Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill —Petitions in favour, from Islington ; South-West Yorkshire ; Rotherham ; Patricxbourne ; Acton ; Shipley ; Coventry ; Standford ; Leeds ; Oakley ; Ormskirk (two) ; Trevethin ; Abergavenny ; Wolverhampton ; and London ; to lie upon the Table	903
Town Councils (Scotland) Bill —Petition from Galston, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	903

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

AMERICAN MAILS —Return [presented 14th March] to be printed. [No. 96]	903
EMIGRATION (COLONIES) —Copy presented, of Report on the Emigrants' Information Office for the year ended 31st December, 1899 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table	903
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT —Return presented, relative thereto [Address 16th February ; <i>Mr. Lloyd Morgan</i>] ; to lie upon the Table	903
MEDICAL COUNCILS —Accounts presented, for 1899 for the General Medical Council and Branch Councils, and of the Dental Registration Fund [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table	903
SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884 —Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 5th March, 1900, declaring that Mr. Edwin Chadwick, postmaster, Dukinfield, Post Office Department, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table	903
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		<i>Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) ...</i>	971
		<i>Mr. Stuart-Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) ...</i>	975
		<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) ...</i>	976
		<i>Mr. C. P. Scott (Lancashire, Leigh) ...</i>	980

Question put.

Point of Order, Mr. C. P. Scott ; Ruling, Mr. Speaker.

The House divided :—Ayes, 120 ; Noes, 229. (Division List No. 67.)

NEW BILLS.

DOG REGULATION.

<i>The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Long, Liverpool, West Derby) ...</i>	985	<i>Dr. Farquharson, Aberdeenshire, W.) ...</i>	985
		<i>Mr. Broadhurst, Leicester ...</i>	985

Bill to amend the Law relating to Dogs, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, and Mr. Attorney General for Ireland.

Dogs Regulation Bill—"To amend the Law relating to Dogs," presented, and read the first time ; to be read a second time on Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 125] ... 985

NAVAL RESERVE (MOBILISATION)—Bill to amend the Royal Naval Reserve (Volunteer) Act, 1859, in relation to calling out the Volunteers for actual service, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney, Mr. Goschen, and Mr. Attorney General.

Naval Reserve Mobilisation Bill—"To amend the Royal Naval Reserve (Volunteer) Act, 1859, in relation to calling out the Volunteers for actual service," presented, and read the first time ; to be read a second time on Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 126] ... 986

War Loan Bill [Third Reading]—Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) ...</i>	986	<i>Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) ...</i>	992
		<i>Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.) ...</i>	993

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 172 ; Noes, 23. (Division List No. 68.)

Bill read the third time and passed.

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Census (Great Britain) Bill—Order for Committee read.*Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.)*

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (*Dr. Tanner, Cork County, Mid*). House counted, and, forty Members being found present,

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to divide the Bill into two Bills, one extending to England and the other extending to Scotland."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 998

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 52 ; Noes, 125. (Division List No. 69.)

Bill considered in Committee.

[*Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith)* in the Chair.]

Mr. Buchanan 999 *Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire)* ... 1001
Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 1000

Clause 1 :—

Amendment proposed—

"On page 1, line 7, to leave out 'Sunday,' and insert 'Saturday.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Roberts.*)

<i>The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chaplin, Lancs, Blackpool)</i>	<i>Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.)</i>	...	...	1002
<i>Mr. Lowles (Shoreditch, Haggerston)</i>	<i>Mr. Tomlinson (Preston)</i>	...	...	1002
...	<i>Mr. Chaplin</i>	...	...	1002
...	...	...	...	1001

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3 :—

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich)</i>	<i>Mr. Richards (Finsbury, E.)</i>	...	1008
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<i>Mr. Chaplin</i>	<i>Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire)</i>	...	1009
<i>Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee)</i>	<i>Mr. Souttar (Dumfriesshire)</i>	...	1010
<i>Mr. Talbot (Oxford University)</i>	<i>Mr. Lloyd - George (Carnarvon Borough)</i>	...	1011
<i>Mr. William Jones (Carnarvonshire, N.)</i>	<i>Lord Hugh Cecil</i>	...	1012
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Amendment put and negatived.

Clause agreed to.

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Clause 4 :—

Amendments proposed—

“In page 2, line 5, to leave out the words ‘in the case of Wales or the County of Monmouth.’”—(*Mr. Lloyd George.*)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause.”

Mr. Chaplin.

Mr Herbert Roberts.

Mr. Lough.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 164 ; Noes, 54. (Division List No. 70.)

Mr. Lowles ... 1015

Amendment proposed—

“On page 2, line 23, to leave out sub-section 4.”—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, “That sub-section 4 stand part of the clause.”

Mr. Chaplin ... 1017

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 5 :—

Amendment proposed—

“In page 3, line 5, after the word ‘parishes’ to insert the word ‘wards.’”—(*Sir T. G. Fardell.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘wards’ be there inserted.”

Mr. Chaplin ... 1017

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 6, 7, and 8 agreed to.

Clause 9 :—

Amendment proposed—

“In page 3, line 33, to leave out ‘may, if he thinks fit,’ in order to insert the word ‘shall.’”—(*Mr. Herbert Roberts.*)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause.”

Mr. Chaplin ... 1018

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clauses 9, 10, and 11 agreed to.

Clause 12 :—

Capt. Sinclair ... 1018 *The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire)* ... 1018

Clauses 12 and 13 agreed to.

Committee report progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

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Electoral Disabilities (Military Service) Bill—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1 :—

Amendment proposed—

“In page 1, line 8, after ‘required,’ to insert the words ‘or in respect of a qualification by which he votes as a lodger.’”—(*Mr. Jeffreys.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Attorney-General (Sir</i>	<i>Col. Denny (Kilmarnock Burghs)</i>	1020
<i>Richard Webster, Isle of</i>	<i>Col. Welby (Taunton)</i>	... 1020
<i>Wight)</i> 1019	<i>Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.)</i>	... 1020

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Another Amendment made.

Amendment proposed—

“In page 1, line 9, after the word ‘of’ to insert the words ‘the permanent department and medical staff of the Army.’”—(*Mr. Jeffreys.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Richard Webster</i>	... 1021	<i>Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester)</i>	.. 1021
<i>Mr. McKenna (Monmouth-</i>		<i>Col. Welby</i>	... 1021
<i>shire, N.)</i> 1021		<i>Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.)</i>	... 1021

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

“In page 1, line 12, after the word ‘not,’ to insert the words ‘In the case of a person entitled to claim the lodger franchise being so absent, his claim may be signed on his behalf by his landlord.’”—(*Mr. Herbert Robertson.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

DISCUSSION—

<i>Sir Richard Webster</i>	... 1022	<i>Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny)</i>	1022
<i>Mr. Bartley</i>	... 1022	<i>Mr. Jeffreys</i>	... 1022

Question put, and agreed to.

Another Amendment made.

<i>Mr. McKenna</i>	... 1023	<i>Sir Richard Webster</i>	... 1024
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Question put, “That the clause as amended stand part of the Bill.”

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 155 ; Noes, 47. (Division List No. 71.)

Clause 2 agreed to.

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White Ridley) ... 1025

New clause added :—

“3. This Act shall apply only to absence during the continuance of the present war in South Africa.”

Bill reported, as amended ; to be considered upon Monday next.

SUPPLY.—Considered in Committee. (In the Committee.)

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ARMY (EXCESSES), 1898-99.

£100, Army Excesses.

<i>Mr. Caldwell</i> (<i>Lanarkshire, Mid</i>)	1026	<i>The Financial Secretary to the War Office</i> (<i>Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.</i>)	1026
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Resolution agreed to; to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.—Considered in Committee. (In the Committee).
1. Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st day of March, 1899 and 1900, the sum of £466,770 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

2. Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, the sum of £46,156,500 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom. Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

Public Health Bill—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

<i>Mr. Caldwell</i>	1027
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It being midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday, 5th April.

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Considered in Committee; Committee reports Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday, 27th June.

NEW BILLS.

PETROLEUM—Bill to Amend the Petroleum Act, 1879, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ure, Mr. Joseph A. Pease, Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael, Colonel Denny, Mr. Compton Rickett, Mr. Cross, Mr. Reckitt, Mr. M'Killop, Mr. Tully, Mr. John Burns, and Mr. Trevelyan ... 1028

Petroleum Bill—"To amend the Petroleum Act, 1879," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 127] ... 1028

VETERINARY SURGEONS AMENDMENT—Bill to further amend the Law relating to Veterinary Surgeons, ordered to be brought in by Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael, Dr. Farquharson, Lord Dalkeith, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Shaw-Stewart, and Mr. Charles Douglas. ... 1028

Veterinary Surgeons Amendment Bill—"To further amend the Law relating to Surgeons," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 128] ... 1028

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve of the Clock.

LORDS : FRIDAY, 16TH MARCH, 1900.

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Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]—Read second time (according to order)	1029
Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Order of the Day for the Second Reading discharged. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with	1029
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RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

TREATY SERIES, No. 6 (1900) —International Sanitary Convention, signed at Venice, 19th March 1897 (Ratification deposited at Rome)	1029
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FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890—Order in Council of 3rd March, 1900, entitled "The China and Corea (Supreme Court) Order in Council, 1900." Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1030

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DISCUSSION :—

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<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...		1043

Bill to amend and extend the provisions of the law of Scotland on the subject of education—presented by the Lord Balfour; read the first time; and to be printed. (No. 31.)

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY—AFFILIATION WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS—Question, The Earl of Kimberley; Answer, The Lord President of the Council (The Duke of Devonshire) ... 1048

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<i>Lord Reay</i> ...	<i>The Prime Minister and Secretary</i>	
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	<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...	1052

Palatine Court of Durham Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING].

The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) ... 1052

Bill read a second time (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

War Loan Bill—Brought from the Commons; read the first time; to be printed; and to be read a second time on Monday next (The Marquess of Salisbury); and Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with. (No. 32) ... 1052

House adjourned at a quarter before Six of the clock.

COMMONS: FRIDAY, 16TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Pontefract Park Bill—Read the third time, and passed ... 1052

Electric Power Bills (by Order)—Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [15th March], "That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding Seven Members, to whom shall be committed the following private Bills by which it is proposed to supply electric power :—Lancashire Electric Power Bill, Durham (County of) Electric Power Supply Bill, South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill, Tyneside Electric Power Bill (read a second time on Thursday, 1st March)."—(*Lord Balcarras*.)

And which Amendment was—

"To leave out the words 'the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding Seven Members,' in order to insert the words 'a Select Committee be appointed' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Galloway*.)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question"

Debate resumed.

The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Ritchie, Croydon*) 1053
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) ... 1054
Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe*) ... 1056

Mr. Galloway (*Manchester, S.W.*) 1057
Sir Henry Fowler, (*Wolverhampton, E.*) ... 1057
Lord Balcarras (*Lancashire, Chorley*) ... 1058

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'not exceeding,' and insert the word 'of.'"—*Sir John Brunner*.)

DISCUSSION—

Mr. Halsey (*Hertfordshire, Watford*) ... 1058
Sir John Brunner (*Cheshire, Northwich*) ... 1059

Mr. Ritchie ... 1059

Amendment agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put and agreed to.

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee of Seven Members, to whom shall be committed the following Private Bills by which it is proposed to supply electrical power—Lancashire Electrical Power Bill ; Burham (County of) Electrical Power Supply Bill ; South Wales Electrical Power Supply Bill ; Tyneside Electric Power Bill (read a second time on Thursday, 1st March).

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That the Committee be subject to the Standing Orders relative to the proceedings of Committees on opposed Bills (except that fixing the number of Members).—(*Mr. Monk*).

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Wolverhampton, Essington, and Cannock Chase Junction Railway Bill —Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Wolverhampton and Essington Mineral Railway Bill of Session 1898, and on the London and North Western (New Railways) Bill of Session 1899, be referred to the Committee on Group No. 3, in respect of the Wolverhampton, Essington, and Cannock Chase Junction Railway Bill.—(<i>Dr. Farquharson</i>)	1060
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) —Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the town of Westport; ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Gerald Balfour.	
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill —"To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the town of Westport," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 129.]	1060
Colonial Bank Bill —Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time	1060
Grantham Gas Bill ; Redhill Gas Bill; City and South London Railway Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed...	1060
Airdrie, Coatbridge, and District Water Trust Bill —Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table	1060
Osset Corporation Gas Bill ; Stockport Corporation Tramways Bill; Wakefield Corporation Market Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	1060
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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill —Petitions in favour, from Parkstone; Runcorn; Croydon; Hove; Chorley; Preston; Salford; and Prestwich; to lie upon the Table	1061
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RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT —Return [presented 15th March] to be printed. [No. 99]	1061
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FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890 —Copy presented, of Order in Council, of 3rd March, 1900, entitled “The China and Corea (Supreme Court) Order in Council, 1900” [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table... ..	1062
LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHs) —Copy presented, of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Camberwell and Westminster, and incorporating the Councils thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 100]	1062
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QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—USAGES OF WAR—BOER ABUSE OF THE WHITE FLAG —Questions, Mr. Platt Higgins (Salford, N.) and Mr. Lucas-Shadwell (Hastings) ; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)	1063
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NEW BILLS.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT—Bill to amend the Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Cornwallis, Dr. Rentoul and Mr. Tomlinson.	
Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill —"To amend the Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 9th May, and to be printed. [Bill 131] ...	1076
FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENTS -Bill to amend the Law relating to Fisheries in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Cornwallis, Dr. Rentoul, and Mr. Tomlinson.	
Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill —"To amend the Law relating to Fisheries in Ireland," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 9th May, and to be printed. [Bill 132] ...	1076
SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND)—Bill to prohibit the sale or supply of exciseable Liquors to Children in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Baird, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Hozier, Mr. McKillop, and Mr. Orr Ewing	
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (Scotland) Bill —"To prohibit the sale or supply of exciseable Liquors to Children in Scotland," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 133] ...	1077
TRUST FUNDS—Bill to authorise the Investment of Trust Funds on the security of Local Rates, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lloyd-George, Sir Walter Foster, Sir James Woodhouse, Colonel Milward, Mr. A. K. Lloyd, Mr. Robson, Mr. Warr, and Mr. Nussey.	

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Trust Funds Bill—"To authorise the Investment of Trust Funds on the security of Local Rates," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 134.]

SUPPLY [4th allotted day]—Considered in Committee—[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair].

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

1. Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £555,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of the Medical Establishment, and for Medicines, etc., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeen-shire, W.)</i>	1078	<i>Mr. Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross)</i>	1086
<i>Mr. Price (Norfolk, E.)</i> ...	1081	<i>Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.)</i>	1086
<i>Mr. Arnold-Forster (Belfast, W.)</i>	1082	<i>The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)</i>	1086
<i>Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston)</i>	1083	<i>Sir Walter Foster</i>	1089
<i>Col. Blundell (Lancashire, Ince)</i>	1086	<i>Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.)</i>	1090

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Item E (Cost of Medicines) be reduced by £100."—(Mr. James Lowther.)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean)</i> ...	1092	<i>Capt. Jessel (St. Pancras, S.)</i> ...	1094
<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	1093	<i>General Lawrie (Pembroke and Haverfordwest)</i>	1094
<i>Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet)</i>	1093	<i>Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.)</i> ...	1094
<i>Dr. Farquharson</i>	1093	<i>Col. Welby (Taunton)</i>	1094
<i>Dr. Tanner (Cork Co., Mid)</i>	1093	<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	1094
<i>Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.)</i>	1093	<i>General Goldsworthy (Hammer-smith)</i>	1095

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,288,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Bounty, etc., of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 134,571, including 30,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Sir Herbert Maxwell (Wigtonshire) 1096

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £2,287,900 be granted for the said Service."—(Mr. Warner.)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Bill (Staffordshire, Leek)</i>	1098	<i>Col. Long (Worcestershire, Evesham)</i>	1100
<i>Major Rasch (Essex, S.E.)</i> ...	1099	<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	1100
<i>Dr. Farquharson</i>	1099	<i>General Lawrie</i>	1104
<i>Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth)</i>	1100	<i>Mr. Warner</i>	1105

Question put, and agreed to.

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Original Question again proposed.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Chas. Dilke</i>	1105	<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	1106
<i>Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.)</i>	1106	<i>Major Rasch</i>	1106

Question put, and agreed to.

3. £144,000, Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. W. F. D. Smith (Strand, Westminster)</i>	1107	<i>Mr. Rutherford (Lancs., Darwen)</i>	1112
<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	1108	<i>Mr. Abel Smith (Christchurch)</i> ...	1112
<i>Col. Welby</i>	1109	<i>Mr. Graham (St. Pancras, West)</i>	1112
<i>Mr. Hermon-Hodge (Oxfordshire, Henley)</i>	1110	<i>Mr. Warner</i>	1113
<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs)</i>	1110	<i>Capt. Jessel</i>	1113
<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	1111	<i>Mr. Seely (Lincoln)</i>	1113
<i>Col. Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport)</i>	1111	<i>Sir Albert Rollit</i>	1114
		<i>Mr. Butcher (York)</i>	1114
		<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	1114

Resolution agreed to.

4. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,230,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including Pay, etc., of the Permanent Staff, which will come in course of payment, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Henry Fletcher (Sussex, Lewes)</i>	1115	<i>Mr. Morrell, (Oxfordshire, Woodstock)</i>	1119
<i>Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.)</i> ...	1118	<i>Col. Cotton-Jodrell (Cheshire Wirral)</i>	1120

[The chair was at this point taken by Mr. Wodehouse, Bath.)]

<i>Mr. Scott Montagu (Hampshire, New Forest)</i>	1121	<i>Mr. Seely</i>	1125
<i>Mr. Channing</i>	1122	<i>Mr. Drage (Derby)</i>	1127
<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	1122	<i>Mr. Radcliffe Cooke (Hereford)</i> ...	1128
<i>Sir Albert Rollit</i>	1123	<i>Sir John Colomb</i>	1130
<i>Sir Mark Stewart (Kirkcudbrightshire)</i>	1124	<i>Dr. Tunner (Cork County, Mid)</i>	1134

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £1,200,000, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny)</i>	1141	<i>Mr. F. W. Wilson (Norfolk, Mid)</i>	1142
<i>Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk Burghs)</i>	1141	<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	1143
		<i>Mr. William Redmond</i>	1144

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 8 ; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 72.)

<i>Dr. Tanner</i>	1144
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Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

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SUPPLY [13TH MARCH] REPORT—Resolutions reported :—

CIVIL SERVICES (EXCESS), 1898-9.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £10, be granted to Her Majesty, to make good an Excess on the Grant for Prisons, England and the Colonies, for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1899."

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

2. "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 430,000 all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £15,200,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Resolution read a second time.

First Resolution agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Second Resolution."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) ...</i>	<i>1146</i>	<i>Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.)</i>	<i>1147</i>
<i>Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.) ...</i>	<i>1146</i>	<i>Sir Chas. Cuyzer (Barrow-in-Furness) ...</i>	<i>1149</i>
<i>Colonel Milward (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon) ...</i>	<i>1148</i>	<i>The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)</i>	<i>1149</i>
		<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) ...</i>	<i>1153</i>

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Third Resolution."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) ...</i>	<i>1156</i>	<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman ...</i>	<i>1158</i>
<i>Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) ...</i>	<i>1157</i>	<i>Mr. Buchanan ...</i>	<i>1159</i>
<i>The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) ...</i>	<i>1157</i>	<i>Mr. Cudwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) ...</i>	<i>1159</i>

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Ordered, That the Resolution which, upon the 2nd day of this instant March, was reported from the Committee of Supply, and which was then agreed to by the House, be now read :

"That 114,800 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, including 18,805 Royal Marines."

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That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during twelve months, for the discipline and regulation of the Army; and that Mr. Wyndham, Mr. Goschen, and Mr. Powell-Williams do prepare and bring it in.

Army Annual Bill—"To provide, during Twelve Months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 135] ... 1160

SUPPLY [15TH MARCH] REPORT. -Resolution reported:—

ARMY (EXCESSES), 1898-9.

"That a sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to Her Majesty, to make good Excesses of Army Expenditure beyond the Grants, for the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1899."

Resolutions agreed to ... 1160

CENSUS (EXPENSES)—Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any Expenses incurred for the purposes of the Census, under any Acts of the present Session for taking the Census in Great Britain and Ireland.—(*Mr. Chaplin.*) ... 1160

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve of the clock.

LORDS: MONDAY, 19TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with—Metropolitan Police Provisional Order; also the Certificate that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill—Military Lands Provisional Order. The same were ordered to lie on the Table ... 1161

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE—Report from: That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the following Bills ought to be dispensed with—St. David's Railway (Abandonment); Dublin Electric Lighting. Read and agreed to ... 1161

London Hydraulic Power Company Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Select Committee: That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill ... 1161

Birmingham (King Edward the Sixth) Schools Bill [H.L.]—Committed 1161

Muirkirk, Mauchline, and Dalmellington Railways (Abandonment) Bill [H.L.]; Cork Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Committed: The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection ... 1161

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Rhymney Iron Company Bill [H.L.]—Read second time (according to order) 1161

Clyde Navigation Bill [H.L.]—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House, That the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill : Order of the Day for the second reading discharged : Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with 1161

Menstone Water (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]—Read third time, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1162

Pontefract Park Bill—Brought from the Commons ; read first time ; and referred to the Examiners 1162

Dublin Corporation Bill ; Clontarf Urban District Council Bill—Message from the Commons, That they have come to the following resolution, to which they desire the concurrence of this House, viz., that it is expedient that the said Bills should be committed to a Joint Committee of both Houses ; the said message to be taken into consideration on Thursday next 1162

Burnley Corporation Bill [H.L.] ; Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Urban District Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Kingston-upon-Thames Corporation Bill [H.L.] ; Kingston-upon-Thames Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Bexhill and Rotherfield Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Dorking Water Bill [H.L.] ; Manchester Ship Canal Bill [H.L.] —Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.—E. Portsmouth, E. Romney, L. Clifford of Chudleigh (*Chairman*), L. Hatherton, L. Seaton ; agreed to ; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock ; and all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 1162

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

MISCELLANEOUS, No. 2 (1900)—Reports from Her Majesty's Representatives abroad on the provision made in foreign countries for the university education of Roman Catholics. Presented (by Command) and ordered to lie on the Table 1163

War Loan Bill—Read second time (according to Order) ; Committee negatived. Then Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to Order), and dispensed with. Bill read third time and passed 1163

Palatine Court of Durham Bill [H.L.]—House in Committee (according to Order). Bill reported without amendment. Standing Committee negatived ; and Bill to be read third time To-morrow 1163

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five of the clock.

COMMONS: 19TH MARCH, 1900.

* PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Great Western Railway. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time ... 1163

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.:—London United Tramways Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time ... 1163

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords]; Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords.] Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time ... 1164

Christchurch, Bournemouth, and Winton Tramways Bill—To be read a second time To-morrow ... 1164

Metropolitan Water Companies Bill—To be read a second time upon Thursday next ... 1164

Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill [by Order]—Order for Second Reading read. Sir F. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) 1164

Mr. Hudson (Hertfordshire, Hitchin) ... 1164
Bill read a second time, and committed.

Shannon Water and Electric Power Bill (By Order)—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Austin (Limerick) ... 1165
Bill read a second time, and committed.

Dublin Corporation Bill; Clontarf Urban District Council Bill (By Order).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient that the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons; that a message be sent to the Lords to communicate this resolution, and to desire their concurrence."—(*Mr. J. W. Lowther.*)

DISCUSSION—

Mr. J. W. Mellor (Yorkshire, ... *Mr. Carson (Dublin University)...* 1169
W. R. Sowerby)... 1168 *Serjeant Hemphill (Tyronc, N.)...* 1171

Question then put, and agreed to.

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Resolved, That it is expedient that the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to communicate this Resolution, and to desire their concurrence.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Morecambe Urban District Council (Gas) Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed ... 1172

PETITIONS.

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petition from Waterloo-with-Seaforth, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1172

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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions, in favour, from Chester (two); Trawden; Burley in Wharfedale; Chadderton; Maidstone; and Oswaldtwistle; to lie upon the Table ... 1172

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Petition from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1173

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petition from Patricroft, in favour, and against corporal punishment for youthful offenders; to lie upon the Table ... 1173

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour, from Portsmouth; Cotgrave; Englefield Green; Ipswich; Stockton on Tees; Holbrook; Sunderland (six); and Mid Kent; to lie upon the Table ... 1173

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Huntingdon; Philadelphia (two); Norwich; London (five); Greenwich; Chester (two); Pontymister; Hayle; King's Lynn (two); West Lynn; Leeds; Hackney; St. Pancras; Sheffield; Cricklewood; Selby; Willesden Green; Harrow Road; Hackney; Highbury; Ipswich; Staines; Enfield; Victoria Park; Holloway; Crouch End; King's Cross; Berwick-on-Tweed; Mid Kent; and Woodbridge; to lie upon the Table ... 1173

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

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ARMY (CLOTHING FACTORY)—Annual Account presented, of the Royal Army Clothing Factory for the year 1898-9, with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 102] ... 1173

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UNIVERSITY EDUCATION OF ROMAN CATHOLICS ABROAD (MISCELLANEOUS, No. 2, 1900)—Copy presented, of Reports from Her Majesty's Representatives Abroad on the provision made in Foreign Countries for the University Education of Roman Catholics [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	1174
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QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—CONTRABAND OF WAR—RIGHT OF SEARCH—THE "HERZOG"—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford)	1174
THE WAR LOAN—Question, Sir J. Leng (Dundee); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.)	1176
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CHINA—PROTECTION OF BRITISH INTERESTS—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick	1182
WEI-HAI-WEI—NAVAL EXPENDITURE—Question, Sir Chas. Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.)	1182
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AUTOMATIC RAILWAY COUPLINGS—Questions, Sir Fortescue Flannery (Yorkshire, Shipley), Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Bill (Staffordshire, Leek), and Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick's); Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) ...	1187
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ARMAGH POSTAL SERVICE—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answer, Mr. Hanbury ...	1192
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TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN—RELIGIOUS TESTS—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Mr. Atkinson ...	1193
LAND SALES—SKERRITT ESTATE, CO. CLARE—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson ...	1194

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PORTADOWN DISTURBANCES—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Mr. Atkinson	1195
ROMAN CATHOLIC DISABILITIES—JUDGE O'BRIEN'S WILL—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. Atkinson	1196
IRISH PRISON OFFICIALS—CASE OF WARDER FLYNN—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Atkinson	1197
MULLINGAR DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson	1198
IRISH MARKET TOLLS—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Atkinson	1198
MUZZLING ORDER IN COUNTY DUBLIN—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, The President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland (Mr. Plunkett, Dublin County, S.)	1198
IRISH FINANCIAL RELATIONS—GOVERNMENT STORES—COMPARATIVE OUTLAY IN THE THREE KINGDOMS—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour	1198
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.)	

NEW WRIT.

For the Borough of Finsbury (Holborn Division), in the room of the Right Hon Sir Charles Hall, K.C.M.G., Q.C., deceased.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Finance Bill [SECOND READING]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Lough (Islington, W.)</i> ...	1200	<i>Mr. Allhusen (Salisbury)</i> ...	1236
<i>Mr. Mendl (Plymouth)</i> ...	1208	<i>Sir Edgar Vincent (Exeter)</i> ...	1240
<i>Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet)</i>	1211	<i>Mr. Billson (Halifax)</i>	1246
<i>Sir William Hareourt (Monmouthshire, W.)</i>	1216	<i>Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.)</i> ...	1250
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i>	1227	<i>Mr. Holland (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham)</i>	1253
<i>Mr. Haddlane (Huddingtonshire)</i>	1232	<i>Mr. Johnson-Ferguson (Leicestershire, Loughborough)</i>	1255
<i>Capt. Pretymann (Suffolk, Woodbridge)</i>	1233	<i>The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.)</i>	1256
		<i>Mr. John Redmond (Waterford)</i>	1264

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 182; Noes, 30. (Division List No. 73.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for Thursday.

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SUPPLY [13TH MARCH] REPORT—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [16th March], “That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Third Resolution, ‘That a sum, not exceeding £15,200,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty’s Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901.”

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

<i>Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon, Boroughs)</i> 1267	<i>Mr. Arnold Forster (Belfast, W.)</i> 1276
<i>Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth)</i> 1268	<i>Mr. Bryn Roberts (Carnarvonshire, Eifion)</i> 1279
<i>Mr. Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield)</i> 1272	<i>Commander Bethell (Yorkshire, E. R., Holderness)</i> 1279
<i>Sir Chas. Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean)</i> ... 1274	<i>Col. Welby (Taunton)</i> 1280
	<i>Dr. Tunner (Cork County, Mid)</i> 1281

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY [16TH MARCH]—Resolutions reported :—

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.—1. “That a sum, not exceeding £555,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, &c., of the Medical Establishment, and for Medicines, &c., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901.”

2. “That a sum, not exceeding £2,288,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Bounty, &c., of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 131,571, including 30,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901.”

3. “That a sum, not exceeding £144,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Miscellaneous Charges of the Yeomanry Cavalry, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901.”

4. “That a sum, not exceeding £1,230,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including Pay, etc., of the Permanent Staff, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901” 1282

Resolutions agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS [15TH MARCH]—Resolutions reported :—1. “That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st day of March, 1899 and 1900, the sum of £466,770 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.”

2. “That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, the sum of £46,156,500 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.”

Resolutions agreed to : Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James William Lowther, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Hanbury.

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Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill—"To apply certain sums out of the Consolidated Fund to the service of the years ending on the 31st day of March, 1899, 1900, and 1901," presented accordingly, and read the First time; to be read a Second time to-morrow... 1282

CENSUS [EXPENSES]—Resolution reported.

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any Expenses incurred for the purposes of the Census, under any Acts of the present Session for taking the Census in Great Britain and Ireland."

Resolution agreed to ... 1283

Census (Great Britain) Bill—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) ... 1283

The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford) ... 1283

Dr. Tanner (Cork Co., Mid) ... 1283

Bill reported without Amendment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read for the Third time."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) ... 1284

Mr. Chaplin ... 1284

Sir F. S. Powell (Wigan) ... 1284

Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire) 1284

Sir E. Dearnley-Lawrence (Cornwall, Truro) ... 1284

Mr. Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) ... 1285

The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.) ... 1285

Question put, and agreed to. Bill read the Third time, and passed.

Census Ireland Bill—[Second Reading].

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. T. M. Healy (Tyrone, N.) ... 1285

The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry) ... 1285

Debate adjourned till Thursday.

Army Annual Bill—[Second Reading].

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) ... 1286

The Under-Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) ... 1286

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) ... 1286

Question put, and agreed to

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Thursday.

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Vagrants' Children Protection Bill [Second Reading]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 1287 *The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.)* 1287

Debate adjourned till Thursday, 29th March.

Roman Catholic Disabilities Removal Bill [Second Reading]—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.)

Second reading deferred till Wednesday.

Bakehouses (Hours of Labour) Bill [Second Reading]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."—(*Mr. Steadman.*)

Mr. Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 1288

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve of the clock.

LORDS: TUESDAY, 20TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [H.L.]—A petition of Messrs. Lewin, Gregory, and Anderson, of No. 6, The Sanctuary, Westminster, parliamentary agents, praying for leave to present a petition of the Right Honourable John Robert William Vesey, Viscount de Vesci, praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill although the time limited by Standing Order No. 92 for presenting such petition has expired; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and Standing Order No. 92 to be considered on Thursday next in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said petition... .. 1289

Purfleet and Gravesend Junction Railway Bill [H.L.]—Committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1289

Fishguard Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 27th of February and on Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed 1289

Glyncorrwg Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 26th February and on Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed 1289

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Glasgow District Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; London County Tramways (No. 1). Central London Railway—Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next...	1289
Newport (Monmouthshire) Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Great Berkhamstead Water Bill [H.L.]—Reported, with amendments	1289
East Shropshire Water Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table	1290
Dundee Harbour Bill [H.L.]—Read third time, and passed, and sent to the Commons	1290

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

TRADE REPORTS —Annual Series : No. 2389—Brazil (Para, 1898–99) ...	1290
LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896 (ISLE OF THANET LIGHT RAILWAYS (EXTENSION) ORDER, 1900) —Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the con- struction of light railways in the boroughs of Ramsgate and Margate in the county of Kent	1290
BOARD OF AGRICULTURE —Annual Reports of Proceedings for the year 1899, under :—	
1. The Diseases of Animals Acts, the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts, etc., etc.	
2. The Tithe Acts, the Copyhold Act, 1894, the Inclosure Acts, the Metropolitan Commons Acts, the Drainage and Improvement of Land Acts, the Universities and College Estates Acts, 1858–1898, the Glebe Lands Act, 1888, etc., etc.	1290
METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY (ROYAL COMMISSION) —Appendices to the minutes of evidence and final Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of the water supply within the limits of the Metropolitan Water Companies. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table	1290
LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896 —Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade under the Light Railways Act, 1896, during the year 1899 ; and of the proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners during the period from the 1st December, 1899, to 31st December, 1899	1290
NATIONAL DEBT (ANNUITIES) —Account of the gross amount of all bank annuities and any annuities for terms of years transferred, and of all sums of money paid, to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt ; and the gross amount of annuities for lives and for terms of years which have been granted for the same, and contracts for payments on death, which have been made within the year ended 5th January, 1900	1291
SUPERANNUATION —Treasury Minute, dated 13th March, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the offices of Registrar- General for Ireland, and of Medical Superintendent in the Registrar- General's office, Ireland, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service are requisite	1291

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Youthful Offenders Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Standing Committee with an amendment: The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. [No. 33.] ... 1291

Palatine Court of Durham Bill [H.L.]—Read the Third time; amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons ... 1291

Census (Great Britain) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read the first time; to be printed; and to be read a second time on Thursday next (The Marquess of Salisbury). [No. 34.] ... 1291

YEOMANRY—Pay, Grants, and Training.

DISCUSSION—

<i>Viscount Galway</i> ... 1291	<i>Lord Windsor</i> ... 1296
<i>The Secretary of State for War (The Marquess of Lansdowne)</i> ... 1293	<i>Lord Clifford of Chudleigh</i> ... 1296
	<i>Lord Newton</i> ... 1296
	<i>The Marquess of Lansdowne</i> ... 1297

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TELEGRAMS FROM SOLDIERS ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Earl of Lichfield</i> ... 1298	<i>The Marquess of Lansdowne</i> ... 1298
<i>Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal</i> ... 1298	

House adjourned at five minutes past Five of the clock.

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 20TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Lee Conservancy Bill—Ordered, That the Secretary of State for War be at liberty to attend by Counsel and Agent at the next sitting of the Committee on the Lee Conservancy Bill.—(*Mr. Oldroyd*) ... 1299

Colonial Bank Bill—Read the third time, and passed... 1299

Knott End Railway Bill (By Order)—Read a second time, and committed... 1299

Christchurch, Bournemouth, and Winton Tramways Bill (By Order) — Read a second time, and committed—*Mr. Lough* (Islington, W.) ... 1299

Ordered, That it be an instruction to the Committee on the Christchurch, Bournemouth, and Winton Tramways Bill to consider whether it is desirable to amend Clause 42 (Cheap fares for labouring classes) by inserting penalties to secure the objects of the Clause, and as to the number of the cars to be provided, the hours at which the cars shall run, and the maximum and minimum fares to be charged.—(*Mr. Lough*.) ... 1299

North Warwickshire Water Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed ... 1300

Private Bills (Group E.)—*MR. LEWIS FRY* reported from the Committee on Group E. of Private Bills, That to meet the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Thursday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.— Report to lie upon the Table' ... 1300

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Harbour, Etc., Bills—Copy ordered, “of the Report of the Board of Trade upon the following Harbour, etc., Bills—North British Railway Bill [H.L.], Southport and Lytham Tramroad Bill”—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)—Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 106.] ... 1300

Huddersfield Corporation Tramways Bill

Great Eastern Railway Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed ... 1300

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 2)—*Mr. JEFFREYS* reported from the Committee on Group 2 of Railway Bills, That the parties promoting the Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways Bill had stated that the evidence of George Mark Davidson, Sheriff of the Hamilton district, was essential to their case; and it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said George Mark Davidson do attend the said Committee on Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock. Ordered, That George Mark Davidson do attend the Committee on Group 2 of Railway Bills on Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock ... 1300

STANDING ORDERS—Resolutions reported from the Committee:—1. “That, in the case of the Central London Railway Petition, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill.”

2. “That, in the case of Portland Urban District Gas, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill.”

3. “That, in the case of the Bray Urban District Council, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill.”

4. “That, in the case of the London and India Docks Joint Committee Bill, Petition of the ‘Urban District Council of Brentford’ for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of their Petition against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with.”

5. “That, in the case of the Devonport Corporation Bill, Petition of the ‘Devonport Guardians of the Poor’ for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of their Petition against the Bill, the said Standing Order not to be dispensed with.” First Four Resolutions agreed to. Report to lie upon the Table ... 1301

PETITIONS.

DORMANT FUNDS IN CHANCERY (COURT v. JEFFERY)—Petition of Samuel Stafford for inquiry; to lie upon the Table... 1301

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY (EXEMPTION FROM RATES)—Petition from St Mary, Islington, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table ... 1301

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill—Petition of the Scottish Sabbath Protection Association, in favour: to lie upon the Table ... 1301

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NATIONAL DEBT ANNUITIES —Account presented, of the Gross Amount of all Bank Annuities and any Annuities for terms of years transferred, and of all Sums of Money paid to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, and the Gross Amount of Annuities for Lives and for terms of years, etc., granted within the year ended 5th January, 1900 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 103]	1302
SUPERANNUATIONS —Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 13th March, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the offices of Registrar General for Ireland, and of Medical Superintendent in the Registrar General's Office, Ireland, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are requisite [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	1302
ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES) —Annual Account presented, for the year 1898-99, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 104]	1303
LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896 —Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the boroughs of Ramsgate and Margate, in the county of Kent (Isle of Thanet Light Railways (Extensions) Order, 1900) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table... ..	1303
LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896 —Copy presented, of Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Trade during the year 1899, and the proceedings of the Light Railways Commissioners during the period from the 1st December, 1898, to the 31st December, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table; and to be printed [No. 105]	1303
BOARD OF AGRICULTURE —Copy presented, of Annual Report of Proceedings under the Tithe Acts, Copyhold Act, 1894, Inclosure Acts, and other Acts, for the year 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.	1303
BOARD OF AGRICULTURE —Copy presented, of Annual Reports of Proceedings under the Diseases of Animals Acts, the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts, &c., for the year 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	1303

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EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES)—Copy presented, of Statement showing (1) the Expenditure from the Grant for Public Education in England and Wales in the year 1899, and Expenditure from 1839 to 1899; (2) the number of Public Elementary Day Schools on the Annual Grant List on the 31st August, 1899, etc.; (3) Detailed Statistics of Inspected Schools, 1898-9, Public Elementary Day Schools, Evening Continuation Schools, and Certified Efficient Schools, etc.; (4) Summary Tables of Educational Statistics; and (5) Number of School Boards under various heads of Population [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 1304

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NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Sir Robert Grey Cornish Mowbray, Baronet, for Borough of Lambeth (Brixton Division) ; John O'Dowd, Esquire, County of Sligo (North Sligo Division) ... 1325

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection : That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures—Lord Balcarras—and had appointed in substitution Mr. Maclean ; report to lie upon the Table	1325
MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to—War Loan Bill without Amendment ; that they have passed a Bill, intituled, “An Act to authorise the Rural Council of Wharfedale to purchase the undertaking of the Menstone Waterworks Company ; and for other purposes” [Menstone Water (Transfer) Bill [<i>Lords</i>]	1325
Menstone Water (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]—Read for the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills	1325

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NEW BILL.

INCEST—Bill to provide for the punishment of the crime of Incest, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Dalbiac, Mr. Robert Cameron, Mr. Whittaker, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Sir John Kennaway, and Mr. Henry Wilson.

Incest Bill—"To provide for the punishment of the crime of Incest, presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 9th May, and to be printed. [Bill 136] ... 1325

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. James Louther (Kent, Thanet) ...</i>	<i>1326</i>	<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) ...</i>	<i>1338</i>
<i>Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.) ...</i>	<i>1329</i>	<i>The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) ...</i>	<i>1340</i>
<i>The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, W.) ...</i>	<i>1331</i>	<i>Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.) ...</i>	<i>1344</i>
<i>Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) ...</i>	<i>1335</i>	<i>Mr. Daly (Monaghan, S.) ...</i>	<i>1345</i>
<i>Mr. Stuart-Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) ...</i>	<i>1337</i>	<i>Mr. Maddison (Sheffield, Brightside) ...</i>	<i>1346</i>
<i>Mr. Hedderwick (Wick Burghs) ...</i>	<i>1338</i>	<i>Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) ...</i>	<i>1347</i>
<i>Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) ...</i>	<i>1338</i>	<i>Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.) ...</i>	<i>1348</i>
		<i>Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.) ...</i>	<i>1349</i>

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 274 ; Noes, 30. (Division List No. 74.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow, at Twelve of the clock.

CONTROL OF THE TREASURY OVER OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS—Mr.

Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) ... 1353

Mr. Tomlinson (Preston) ... 1360

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (*Mr. Henniker Heaton, Canterbury*) ; House counted, and forty Members not being present :—

The House was adjourned at half after Seven of the Clock.

COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 21ST MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY—Report [20th March] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Reginald Hanson and Mr. Alban Gibbs ... 1361

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RAILWAY, &C., BILLS—Copy ordered, “of Report by the Board of Trade upon all the Railway, Canal, Tramway, Harbour and Tidal Waters, Gas, Electricity, and Water Bills, and Provincial Orders, of Session 1900.”—*(Mr. Ritchie.)*

Copy presented accordingly ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.
[No. 107] 1361

PETITIONS.

Companies Bill—Petition from Glasgow, for alteration ; to lie upon the Table 1361

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Annadale, against ; to lie upon the Table 1361

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Lanark, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 1361

Licensed Premises (Hours of Sale) (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Greenock, in favour ; to lie upon the Table... .. 1361

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petitions in favour, from Fordingbridge ; and Esher ; to lie upon the Table 1361

Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment Bill—Petition from Dunfermline, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 1361

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899—Petition from St. Mary, Battersea, for alteration of Law ; to lie upon the Table 1362

Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women Bill—Petition of the Personal Rights Association, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 1362

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION (MUNICIPAL TRADING)—Petition of the London Chamber of Commerce, for inquiry by a Select Committee ; to lie upon the Table 1362

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour, from Wootton-under-Edge ; Charfield ; Kingswood ; Stockton-on-Tees ; Sutton-in-Ashfield ; Mansfield ; Pleasley Hill ; Bristol ; and North Lambeth ; to lie upon the Table 1362

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Manchester ; Bristol ; Sudbury ; Wirral ; Hebden Bridge ; Glasgow ; London ; and Walthamstow ; to lie upon the Table 1362

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Clydebank ; Sheffield ; and Wycliffe ; to lie upon the Table 1362

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—Petition from Bristol, for cessation of hostilities ; to lie upon the Table 1362

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Bede ; Woodford ; Goole ; Werneth ; Birchfield ; Bristol ; Great Ayton ; Durham ; Halifax ; Harrogate ; Forest Hill ; and Tudhoe Colliery ; to lie upon the Table 1362

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Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill—Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the chair.

Clause 1 :—

Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) 1362 *Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.)*... 1364

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2 :—

Question proposed, “That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill.”

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 98 ; Noes, 10. (Division List No. 75.)

Question proposed : “That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill.”

Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) ... 1365 *The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury, Preston)* ... 1365

Clause agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time To-morrow.

Merchant Shipping (Liability of Shipowners) Bill [SECOND READING]— Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Bill be read a second time.”—(*Mr. Charles MacArthur.*)

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out all the words after the word ‘That,’ in order to add the words ‘this House does not consider it would be equitable to pass a Bill extending the limitation of the liability of the owners of ships to claims for loss or damage to property on land without a reciprocal limitation of liability in favour of the owners of such property for loss or damage caused to ships.’”—(*Sir William Houldsworth.*)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.)</i> ... 1373	<i>Mr. Warr (Liverpool, East Toxteth)</i> 1384
<i>Mr. Platt-Higgins (Salford, N.)</i> ... 1378	<i>Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough)</i> ... 1387
<i>Mr. Provand (Glasgow, Blackfriars)</i> ... 1379	<i>Mr. Ure (Linlithgow)</i> ... 1389
<i>Sir Fortescue Flannery (Yorkshire, Shipley)</i> ... 1381	<i>The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight)</i> ... 1392
<i>Mr. Harrington (Dublin, Harbour)</i> ... 1383	<i>Sir R. T. Reid (Dumfries Burghs)</i> 1396
	<i>Mr. MacIver (Liverpool, Kirkdale)</i> ... 1399

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) ... 1402 *Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick)* 1404

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

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WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT (1897) EXTENSION BILL [Second Reading]—
Order for Second Reading read.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Grant Lawson (Yorkshire, Thirsk)</i> ...	1408	<i>Sir Samuel Hoare (Norwich)</i> ...	1417
<i>Sir William Harcourt (Monmouthshire, W.)</i> ...	1410	<i>Mr. F. W. Wilson (Norfolk, Mid)</i> ...	1419
<i>The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White Ridley, Lancs. Blackpool)</i> ...	1411	<i>Col. Lockwood (Essex, Epping)</i> ...	1419
<i>Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire)</i> ...	1414	<i>Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough)</i> ...	1421
<i>Col. Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport)</i> ...	1415	<i>Sir W. Thorburn (Peebles and Selkirk)</i> ...	1421
<i>Sir James Joicey (Durham, Chester-le-Street)</i> ...	1416	<i>Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.)</i> ...	1422
		<i>Lord Willoughby de Eresby (Lincolnshire, Horncastle)</i> ...	1423
		<i>Mr. Asquith (Fife, East)</i> ...	1424
		<i>Mr. Kenyon (Lancashire, Bury)</i> ...	1425

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Compensation for Damage to Crops Bill—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

<i>Mr. Warner (Staffordshire Lichfield)</i> ...	1426
<i>Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.)</i> ...	1426
<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid)</i> ...	1426

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday next.

Boilers Registration and Inspection (No. 2) Bill—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn ... 1427**Highways and Bridges Act (1891) Amendment Bill—**Considered in Committee. (In the Committee.) Clause 2 :—Committee report progress ; to sit again To-morrow ... 1427**Colonial Solicitors Bill—**Second Reading—Order for Second Reading proposed.

<i>Mr. Hedderwick (Wick Burghs)</i> ...	1427
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Bill read a second time and committed for To-morrow.

MIDWIVES (EXPENSES)—Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such expenses as the Treasury may certify to have been necessarily incurred by the General Medical Council, under any Act of the present session, to secure the better training of midwives, and to regulate their practice (Queen's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Sir John Gorst*) ... 1427

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE—First Report brought up, and read ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed ... 1427

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Northern Railway Bill ; Hartlepool Gas and Water Bill ; Cheshire Lines Committee Bill ; Spalding Urban District Council (Water) Bill ; Wetherby District Water Bill. Reported, with Amendments ; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1428

MUNICIPAL TRADING COMMITTEE—On the motion for the adjournment of the House—

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Henry Fowler (Wolver-</i>	<i>Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.)</i>	1430
<i>hampton)</i>	<i>The First Lord of the Treasury</i>	
<i>Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.) ...</i>	<i>(Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester,</i>	
<i>Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 1428</i>	<i>E.)</i>	1430
<i>Mr. Jonathan Samuel (Stock-</i>	<i>Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) ...</i>	1431
<i>ton) 1429</i>	<i>Mr. A. J. Balfour</i>	1432
<i>Mr. Banbury (Camberwell,</i>		
<i>Peckham) 1430</i>		

Adjourned at ten minutes before Six of the clock.

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Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill was originated in the Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Census (Great Britain)	<i>Marquess of Salisbury</i>	Read 1 ^a 20 Mar. (1291)
Copyright [H.L.]	<i>Lord Monkswell</i>	Read 1 ^a 5 Mar. (4)
Copyright (Artistic) [H.L.]	<i>Lord Monkswell</i>	Read 1 ^a 5 Mar. (4)
*Education (Scotland) [H.L.]	<i>Lord Balfour of Burleigh</i>	Read 1 ^a 16 Mar. (1031)
*Lunacy [H.L.]	<i>The Lord Chancellor</i>	Report 5 Mar. (14); Read 3 ^a 8 Mar. (337)
Midwives [H.L.]	<i>Lord Glenesk</i>	Read 1 ^a 9 Mar. (477)
Militia Ballot [H.L.]	<i>Earl of Wemyss</i>	Read 1 ^a 9 Mar. (476)
Money Lending [H.L.]	<i>Lord James of Hereford</i>	Committee, 5 Mar. (13); Report from Standing Committee, 13 Mar. (699); Report, 15 Mar. (895)
*Palatine Court of Durham [H.L.]	<i>The Lord Chancellor</i>	Read 1 ^a 13 Mar. (699); Read 2 ^a 16 Mar. (1052); Committee, Report, 19 Mar. (1163); Read 3 ^a 20 Mar. (1291)
Public Libraries [H.L.]	<i>Lord Windsor</i>	Read 2 ^a 9 Mar. (472)
Trawlers' Certificates Suspension [H.L.]	<i>Earl of Comperdown</i>	Read 1 ^a 12 Mar. (561)
*War Loan	<i>Marquess of Salisbury</i>	Read 1 ^a 16 Mar. (1052); Read 2 ^a and 3 ^a 19 Mar. (1163)
Youthful Offenders [H.L.]	<i>Lord James of Hereford</i>	Read 2 ^a 5 Mar. (4); Committee, 12 Mar. (555); Reported from Standing Committee, 20 Mar. (1291)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

No.	Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
121	*Agricultural Holdings	<i>Mr. Long</i>	Read 1 ^o 12 Mar. (599)
81	Ancient Monuments Protection	<i>Lord Balcarras</i>	Read 2 ^o 7 Mar. (330)
135	*Army Annual	—	Read 1 ^o 16 Mar. (1160); Read 2 ^o 19 Mar. (1286)
76	Bakehouses (Hours of Labour)	<i>Mr. Woods</i>	Second Reading (adjourned) 19 Mar. (1288)

No.	Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
1	Boilers Registration and Inspection	<i>Mr. Fenwick</i>	Order for Second Reading withdrawn 7 Mar. (266)
88	Boilers Registration and Inspection (No. 2)	<i>Sir W. Houldsworth</i>	Bill withdrawn 21 Mar. (1427)
107	Boilers Registration and Inspection (No. 3)	<i>Mr. Provand</i>	Bill withdrawn 8 Mar. (403)
93	*Census (Great Britain)	<i>Mr. Chaplin</i>	Read 2° 9 Mar. (497); Committee 15 Mar. (995); Committee, Report, Third Reading 19 Mar. (1283)
120	*Census (Ireland)	<i>Mr. Atkinson</i>	Read 1° 12 Mar. (598); Second Reading (adjourned) 19 Mar. (1285)
123	Colonial Solicitors	<i>Mr. Hedderwick</i>	Read 1° 13 Mar. (745); Read 2° 21 Mar. (1427)
51	Compensation for Damage to Crops	<i>Mr. Jeffreys</i>	Second Reading (adjourned) 21 Mar. (1426)
—	*Consolidated Fund (No. 2)	—	Read 1° 19 Mar. (1283); Read 2° 20 Mar. (1326); Committee, Report, 21 Mar. (1362)
125	*Dogs Regulation	<i>Mr. Long</i>	Read 1° 15 Mar. (985)
106	} *Electoral Disabilities (Military Service)	<i>Sir M. White Ridley</i>	Read 2° 8 Mar. (403); Committee 15 Mar. (1019)
130			
115	*Finance	<i>Mr. J. W. Lowther</i>	Read 1° 7 Mar. (330); Read 2° 19 Mar. (1200)
132	Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment	<i>Mr. Seton-Karr</i>	Read 1° 16 Mar. (1076)
82	Highways and Bridges Act (1891) Amendment	<i>Mr. Jefferys</i>	Read 2° 14 Mar. (892); Committee, Progress reported, 21 Mar. (1427)
136	Incest	<i>Col. Dalbiac</i>	Read 1° 20 Mar. (1325)
118	*Land Charges [H.L.]	—	Read 1° 9 Mar. (495)
13	Local Government (Scotland)	<i>Mr. Nicol</i>	Second Reading (adjourned) 14 Mar. (891)
119	*Lunacy [H.L.]	—	Read 1° 9 Mar. (495)
3	Merchant Shipping (Liability of Shipowners)	<i>Sir Donald Currie</i>	Read 2° 21 Mar. (1366)
8	Midwives	<i>Mr. Tatton Egerton</i>	Read 2° 9 Mar. (535)
126	*Naval Reserve (Mobilisation)	<i>Mr. Macartney</i>	Read 1° 15 Mar. (986)
23	Old Age Pensions	<i>Sir Fortescue Flannery</i>	Second Reading (adjourned) 7 Mar. (312)
15	Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies)	<i>Mr. Galloway</i>	Bill withdrawn 7 Mar. (312)
127	Petroleum	<i>Mr. Ure</i>	Read 1° 15 Mar. (1028)
91	*Police Reservists (Allowances)	<i>Sir M. White Ridley</i>	Read 2° 9 Mar. (496)

No.	Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
112 100	Professional Accountants Public Health	<i>Mr. Tomlinson</i> <i>Mr. Thornton</i>	Read 1° 6 Mar. (222) Second Reading (ad- journed) 15 Mar. (1027)
124 30	Rivers Pollution Prevention Roman Catholic Disabilities Removal	<i>Sir Francis Powell</i> <i>Mr. Flavin</i>	Read 1° 13 Mar. (745) Second Reading (ad- journed) 19 Mar. (1287)
133 38	Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (Scotland) Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2)	<i>Mr. Cameron Corbett</i> <i>Mr. Souttar</i>	Read 1° 16 Mar. (1077) Read 2° 9 Mar. (517); Committee, Pro- gress reported, 12 Mar. (696)
131	Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts Amendment	<i>Mr. Seton-Karr</i>	Read 1° 16 Mar. (1076)
117 57	Shop Hours Acts Amendment Shops	<i>Mr. Provind</i> <i>Sir Charles Dilke</i>	Read 1° 7 Mar. (331) Order for Second Reading read; House adjourned: 6 Mar. (263)
2	Sunday Closing (Monmouth- shire)	<i>Mr. Spicer</i>	Read 2° 14 Mar. (823); Committee, Pro- gress reported, 15 Mar. (1028)
113	Tiends (Scotland)	<i>Mr. Nicol</i>	Read 1° 6 Mar. (222)
116	Truck Acts Amendment	<i>Mr. Broadhurst</i>	Read 1° 7 Mar. (331)
134	Trust Funds	<i>Mr. Lloyd George</i>	Read 1° 16 Mar. (1077)
64	Vagrants' Children Protection	<i>Mr. Drage</i>	Second Reading (ad- journed) 19 Mar. (1287)
128	Veterinary Surgeons Amend- ment	<i>Sir T. Gibson-Car- michael</i>	Read 1° 15 Mar. (1028)
114	*War Loan Bill	<i>Mr. J. W. Lowther</i>	Read 1° 7 Mar. (330); Read 2° 13 Mar. (745); Committee, Report, 14 Mar. (892); Read 3° 15 Mar. (986)
14	Workmen's Compensation Act (1897) Extension	<i>Mr. Harry Foster</i>	Read 2° 21 Mar. (1405)



THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(AUTHORISED EDITION)

IN THE
SEVENTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, APPOINTED
TO MEET THE 30TH JANUARY 1900, IN THE 63RD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1900.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 5th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :

Donegal Railway [H.L.].

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the

Barnsley Corporation Bill [H.L.]

ought to be dispensed with and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that Clauses 17 to 47 relating to tramways be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petition for additional provisions in the

Caledonian Railway Bill [H.L.]

ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to the Committee on the Bill to insert the additional provision.

VOL. LXXX. [FOURTH SERIES.]

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the

Newry, Keady, and Tynan Light Railway Bill

ought to be dispensed with, provided that the words in Clause 21 of the Bill "or the Urban Council may, if they so think fit, include the amount to be raised by such rate in the sums to be raised by means of the Newry Town Rate, and such amount shall accordingly be raised as part of the Newry Town Rate, and in such case any statutory or other limit of the Newry Town Rate shall not apply in respect of the amount so to be raised" be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the

Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Bill

ought to be dispensed with, provided that the powers to construct Tramway No. 6 be struck out of the Bill.

That the Committee have considered the special report from the examiner in respect of the

Great Grimsby Street Tramways Bill [H.L.],

and are of opinion that the further Standing Orders applicable to the Bill have been complied with.

Read, and agreed to.

A

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

BRISTOL WATER BILL [H.L.]
CORK, BANDON, AND SOUTH COAST
RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

Committed.

BARRY RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS)
BILL [H.L.]

BEXHILL AND ROTHERFIELD RAIL-
WAY BILL [H.L.]

DORKING WATER BILL [H.L.]

LIVERPOOL OVERHEAD RAILWAY
BILL [H.L.]

MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL BILL [H.L.]

SOUTH ESSEX WATER BILL [H.L.]

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY BILL
[H.L.]

GLASGOW AND SOUTH-WESTERN
RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN RAIL-
WAY OF IRELAND BILL [H.L.]

Committed. The Committees to be
proposed by the Committee of Selection.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON ACT, 1898.

Report to accompany Statutes and
Regulations made by the Commissioners
appointed under the University of Lon-
don Act, 1898: together with an
appendix of correspondence.

TREATY SERIES, No. 5 (1900).

Procès-verbal recording the accession of
the Russian Empire to the Cape Spartel
International Lighthouse Convention of
31st March, 1865; signed at Tangier,
31st May, 1899.

TRADE REPORTS.

Annual Series: No. 2386. Finances of
the Netherlands, for the year 1899-1900.

Presented (by command), and ordered
to lie on the Table.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

The Constitution Acts Amendment Act,
1899. No. XIX.

The Electoral Act, 1899. No. XX.

Laid before the House (pursuant to
Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILLS.

COPYRIGHT BILL [H.L.] (No 18.)

A Bill to amend and consolidate the
law relating to literary copyright: And

COPYRIGHT (ARTISTIC) BILL [H.L.]
(No. 19.)

A Bill to amend and consolidate the
law relating to artistic copyright.

Were presented by the Lord Monkswell:
read 1^a; and to be printed.

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL [H.L.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second
Reading read.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My
Lords, I have some confidence that this
Bill will receive not only your unanimous
but your cordial support. The object of
the measure as proposed now for Second
Reading is to keep young children out of
prison, and thereby not only to relieve
them from a punishment oftentimes of a
most severe and injurious character, but
also, it is hoped, to diminish the numbers
of the criminal class. It is gratifying,
of course, to know how great has been
the diminution of crime of late years. If
we take the twenty years from 1878 to
1898, the number of persons convicted
for indictable offences at assizes and
quarter sessions fell from 16,000 to
11,000, whilst from 1880 to 1898 the
number of summary convictions fell by
as many as 10,000. Various causes have
contributed to bring about this result—
the prosperity of the country, full em-
ployment, increased wages, the lower
price of provisions, education, and greater
sympathy between the classes. All these
have tended to diminish the number of
the criminal class. But still there is
opportunity for doing much more to check
the supply of habitual offenders, and it is
for that purpose that this Bill is designed.
The habitual offender is a difficult person
to deal with. It is most difficult to effect
a complete change in his habit of life,
but if we can stop the supply to this
class, if we accept the old Latin
saying that: "It is better to seek the
fountain than intercept the rivulets," we
shall thereby diminish the recruiting
power of the criminal class, and gradually
prevent the habitual offender coming into

existence at all. The object of this Bill is to substitute a punishment other than that of imprisonment upon young persons under sixteen years of age. A great deal has been done in this direction of late years, but still something remains to be done. During 1899 177 children under fourteen years of age, many of them under twelve years of age, were committed to prison, and they have remained in prison for seven and fourteen days, and even six weeks, for offences which I do not think could be judged to represent crime at all. In 1879 my noble friend Lord Cross, who was then Home Secretary, passed through the Legislature a valuable measure called the Summary Jurisdiction Act. By that Act magistrates have the power to substitute for imprisonment the punishment of whipping upon children in respect of certain offences—only some three or four are mentioned in the schedule of that Act. In the Bill which was introduced last year by the Government it was proposed to extend that power, not only to the offences mentioned in the Act of 1879, but to all indictable offences except murder and manslaughter. That Bill received your Lordships' approval, but did not pass through the House of Commons. It is somewhat remarkable that, whilst that Bill was proceeding through your Lordships' House, a Bill came up from the House of Commons, introduced by Mr. Bryn Roberts, in which it was proposed that certain indictable offences should be dealt with summarily by the magistrates. The power was extended to cases of larceny, embezzlement, and false pretences. I took advantage, on behalf of the Home Office, of that Bill, but I was only able to deal, in that Bill, with indictable offences, and a clause was inserted and approved by this House by which the power of whipping young persons under fourteen years of age was given in respect of all indictable offences. That is how the law stands under the Act of last year, the two exceptions being the offences of murder and manslaughter. As the measure dealt with indictable offences only, I felt that there was no power to deal in that Bill with summary offences. Therefore the law is in the anomalous position that, while a magistrate can inflict the punishment of whipping in lieu of imprisonment on young offenders convicted of the most serious indictable offences, he has not the power of so dealing with summary

convictions. What is the result? The Legislature has of recent years extended the power of local authorities to make bye-laws to regulate the different localities over which those bodies have control. These bye-laws refer to the proper control of traffic, etc., and some of them deal with such venial offences as playing football in the streets. Infringements of these bye-laws by children cannot be called crimes; yet, in default of payment of fines, children brought before the magistrate for offences of this kind have to be sent to prison for days and even weeks. The magistrate has no power to inflict the punishment of whipping upon a child who commits an offence of this kind, whereas he can do so in the case of a boy convicted of burglary and other indictable offences. To send a child of timid disposition to prison is a terrible punishment. I may mention to your Lordships, as I did in introducing this Bill last year, that the Home Office have received complaints from time to time that the screams of the children throughout the night have prevented the other prisoners from getting any sleep. A complaint on the matter was made by certain defendants who were sent to Holloway in respect of affairs in South Africa, and the Home Office have ordered that the cells in which children are confined shall have doors so constructed that they shall be able to see into the corridor and so get rid of the alarm caused by being placed from six o'clock in the evening till six o'clock in the morning in a dark cell without being able to see anything. If the child is not timid and frightened, if he is disposed to resist the cruelty of his punishment, he becomes hardened and accustomed to prison life, and it ceases to have any terror for him. It is from such that the class to whom I have referred, the habitual offenders, is recruited, and thus it is that the ranks of our criminals are filled up and still continue to be far more numerous than they ought to be. I have explained to your Lordships the particular object of this Bill. There may be some who object to the infliction of the punishment of flogging. There are men who think that flogging is not a wise punishment, and that it amounts to cruelty; but the punishment suggested in this Bill is of a kind which cannot cause any suggestion to be made that it represents cruelty. It is a punishment of the mildest character, regulated

according to the age of the child, and it must be inflicted in the presence of the child's parent or guardian. Such will be the main result of the Bill, but other matters have to be dealt with too. Great difficulty is experienced in the case of remands. Take the case of a young child of 11 or 12 years of age. The magistrate has to deal with him, but as witnesses are not present a remand is necessary. What is to be done? At once you get the infliction of the punishment of imprisonment if you remand the child to prison, and all the evils which are sought to be guarded against in this Bill come into play. What this Bill proposes is that the magistrate shall have the power, if it is necessary to remand a youthful offender in order to determine whether he shall be committed for trial or punished or not, of placing him in the custody of a married constable or any fit person willing to receive him. It is a sort of criminal out-door relief. The person to whom the child is entrusted will be answerable for his re-appearance when the period of remand expires. This proposal necessitates a little expenditure, for which the parent may be made answerable, but, failing that, I am glad to say that on this occasion the Treasury have not interfered in the exercise of the powers of the Constitution, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has agreed to the payment of 6s. a week in respect of each child so treated. This proposal will not only prove of great advantage to the child, but also to the prison authorities, for nothing can interfere more with the good government of our prisons than the sending to them of these young children. There is one other important clause which will probably require some consideration. I refer to Clause 3, which provides that if a child commits any offence, and it is proved that his parent or guardian has conduced thereto by neglect, without sufficient excuse, to exercise due control over him, the parent or guardian shall be deemed to be guilty of having contributed to the commission of the offence. It may be almost metaphysical to determine what has conduced to a child's crime, but there can, I think, be no doubt that this provision will cause parents to discharge their duty more effectually, and by restraint or example endeavour to prevent their children entering into a course of crime. There are several minor provisions in the Bill which

Lord James of Hereford.

I think will be useful. For instance, in Clause 5 a court of assize or quarter sessions is given the like power of committing a child to an industrial school as may be exercised by two justices under Section 15 of the Industrial Schools Act, 1866. There are other provisions which will meet with the approval of your Lordships, and need not be discussed in detail. When a child is convicted of an offence so slight that the magistrate sees no need to send him to prison, and inflicts the slight corporal punishment provided in this Bill, that shall not be regarded as a conviction of felony at all, and the child will not have the disqualification throughout his life of having been convicted for felony whilst very young. I hope your Lordships will regard this as a valuable portion of that class of legislation which is effecting much good by so amending our criminal procedure that in the end we may derive the benefit of seeing the criminal classes in this country greatly diminished.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord James of Hereford.*)

EARL CARRINGTON: My Lords, I think the House will agree with all the noble Lord has said as to the cruelty of sending a little child to prison; but there was one expression which fell from him to which some of us demur. I allude to the statement in which he referred to the mildness of the punishment of whipping. I am glad to find, by Clause 1 of the Bill, that a child under twelve is not to receive more than twelve strokes with the birch rod; but would it not be more humane to say that no child under eight or nine years of age should be whipped at all? Eighteen strokes is the maximum number which can be inflicted on a boy of any age, but I regard that number as rather too high. Noble Lords who were at Eton will remember that no one had more than twelve. I remember that twelve well. I would ask the noble and learned Lord whether the maximum number in the Bill might not be reduced.

*LORD NORTON: This is one of the most important Bills that has been before your Lordships' House for some time. It deals with a subject upon which I can speak with some knowledge, and I desire to express my gratitude to the noble and learned Lord for having intro-

duced it. I have taken an interest for over half a century in the treatment of youthful offenders, since the first legislation about it, and I am informed by the police that the reformatory I established in the neighbourhood of Birmingham, the second after that of Red Hill, has "broken up," to use their own expression, the nursery of crime in the city of Birmingham. My noble friend has in this Bill hit two or three important points on which the law is at present defective, and if he is able to get it through Parliament this session he will have done a very great service to the country. I can hardly conceive anyone objecting to the corporal punishment of children instead of sending them to prison. Sending children to prison is cruel and mischievous. Corporal punishment is suitable, and has a much more deterrent effect. Children will not come again for it if they can help it. It is the right mode of treating them. The Bill most importantly recognises the fact that in ninety-nine cases out of every 100 the parents are the chiefly guilty persons, and I welcome Clause 3 of the Bill, which makes the parent or guardian liable for offences committed by the child. Although children must be punished if they commit an offence, you can hardly say that they are solely guilty. I think there are very few of your Lordships, if in infancy you had been turned out into the streets to earn your livelihood by picking pockets, who would not have gone as far astray as the children who get into our reformatories and industrial schools. This Bill seems to take a bold but wise step in making the parent, unless he can give sufficient excuse, liable for having contributed to the commission of the offence. In recent years the State has placed itself far too much *in loco parentis* towards children, thus relieving parents of their proper responsibility. I therefore rejoice that the Bill makes parents, to some extent, answerable for the offences of their children. I think it is also wise that power is to be given to the magistrate to order that fines imposed on the parent may be applied towards compensating the person injured by the child's offence. This Bill goes a step further, and compels the parent not only to pay the cost of proceedings against the child, but to give security for the better conduct of the child in future. That was strongly recommended by the Royal Commission. The

fourth clause provides that a court of Summary Jurisdiction, on remanding or committing for trial any child, may, instead of sending him during the interval to prison, make an order that he be placed in the custody of any fit person who is willing to receive him. It has always been a great puzzle to know what to do with children while on remand. At present they are sent to prison. This Bill will put an end to that practice. I think the noble and learned Lord has hit upon an excellent course in leaving it to the discretion of the magistrate to select fit persons who will take charge of the child during the short interval while waiting for trial, or finding a reformatory, or while the circumstances of the parent are being investigated. The noble and learned Lord has not referred to what, in my opinion, is one of the most important points in the Bill. I refer to Clause 6, which provides for the recovery of the expense of maintenance of a child in custody from the parent or guardian. It is important that a parent should not be able to save the expense of a child by leading it into crime; he should be made to pay as much for the maintenance of the child in a reformatory as the child would cost at home. I have even had a mother ask me how she could qualify her child to get into a reformatory and so save the expense of keeping him. At present the method of recovering the cost from the parent is rather roundabout. When the magistrate convicts a child and directs that he shall go to a reformatory, he sends to the Officer of Reformatories in London. That officer then puts himself in communication with the police on the spot, who find out the circumstances of the parent. They then report to the Reformatory Officer in London, who decides upon the payment which shall be made, and his order goes back to the local police, and for final sanction to the magistrate. This Bill makes the process direct instead of indirect, and leaves it to the magistrates on the spot, when they convict a child and wish to send him to a reformatory, to find out through their own local police the circumstances of the parents and what they should contribute. It throws the onus on the parent of proving that he is not able to pay, instead of on the officer to show that the parent is able to pay. The mode of recovery of payment is simplified, it being made

recoverable as an order of affiliation. For the first time we shall get this most important provision by this Bill. I can hardly conceive any objection being offered to the measure, and I trust that it will become law this session.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, my noble friend who has just spoken has always had such an extraordinary belief in the efficacy of whipping that I am not surprised that he views this Bill with unqualified satisfaction. I do not view it with unqualified satisfaction, nor do I view it with unqualified dissatisfaction. There is a good deal to be said both ways. There is very strong argument in favour of a Bill of this kind from the desire, which my noble friend referred to, that children should not be sent to prison. I entirely sympathise with that desire; but we must not shut our eyes to the disadvantage of and objections to a system of whipping. My noble friend has told us that once whipped twice shy, and that it will be seldom that a boy who has been whipped once will come back again. I am told on excellent authority that, at the school already referred to, where I was, a boy not altogether unconnected with this assembly, though not a member of it, came back eighteen times. I am not at all surprised at that, because I have known boys personally who did not care in the least degree how often they were whipped, and I could mention a very distinguished person, who is not present, whom I have often heard say he didn't care a fig about it. You must not suppose, therefore, that whipping is a perfectly efficacious remedy, and we should very carefully consider how far we go in this direction. I have not had personally the experience my noble friend behind me (Earl Carrington) has had, but I confess I somewhat question—I do not say that I shall oppose it—the wisdom of a maximum of eighteen strokes, because you are going to entrust the administration of this Bill to every justice throughout the country sitting in petty sessions, and any offence, however small, may be punished by whipping. I have not the least desire to decry my brother justices, who, I believe, administer the law in a manner far better than is generally ascribed to them, but in so large a body there are men of not very

Lord Norton.

good judgment who take a wrong view of punishment. It is possible, for instance, that a boy poacher would be severely whipped, or that there would be some very indignant magistrate who thought that apple stealing was a very terrible crime and ordered the boy a severe whipping. If that were done, I am sure there would be an outcry against whipping. Within certain limits, however, I entirely agree that everything possible should be done to prevent children being sent to prison, and I do think that for smaller boys whipping is the appropriate punishment, if not too severe. I welcome the provision by which boys who are going to reformatories will not be sent to prison. I shall abstain from going into the different clauses now, because the Bill will no doubt go to the Standing Committee, where it will be reasonably judged and brought into a form in which it will work well.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER: My Lords, I should like to add a further word of thanks to the noble and learned Lord for introducing this Bill. The recognition which both sides of the House have given to his action must naturally cause him to feel that he is right in believing that this Bill, though a small one, may be far-reaching in its consequences. The noble Earl, the Leader of the Opposition, seems to me to have overlooked, in his criticisms, a most important point. The remarks of the noble Earl as to the danger of unwise or over-severe justices whipping a boy who perhaps did not deserve so severe a chastisement may possibly be deserved. But what is the alternative? It is only in the case of boys who might otherwise be sent to prison that this clause operates. Does the noble Earl mean to say that it is better that a little boy should be sent to prison for six months? To my mind, if in after life a boy be any the worse for a mistaken whipping, ten thousand times more will he be the worse for having gone to prison for six months, which is the alternative. I cannot express too strongly my approval of the provision that a boy or a girl should no longer have to be sent to prison on the way to a reformatory. Nothing can be more mischievous in after life than that stamp, even apart from its direct and immediate danger, and the provision in this Bill seems, so far as one can judge, exactly calculated to meet

that particular difficulty, and to take away what has hitherto been a heart-breaking cause of sorrow to not a few of those who are interested in young offenders. I believe that if the Bill becomes law, which I hope will be the case very shortly, it will effect an untold amount of good.

On Question, agreed to ; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

MONEY LENDING BILL [H.L.]

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

LORD MONKSWELL : I should like to ask the noble and learned Lord who has charge of this Bill a question as to Clause 1. I do not understand exactly what it means as at present drafted. In Clause 1 these words occur—

“ If the Court has reason to believe that the interest charged in respect of the sum actually lent exceeds the rate of interest mentioned in the schedule to this Act, or that the amounts charged for expenses, inquiries, fines, bonus, premium, renewals, or any other charges, are excessive, and that the transaction is harsh and unconscionable.”

I want to know how the noble and learned Lord reads that. Does he mean that the Court would have discretion to say that, although the interest was excessive, still the contract was not harsh and unconscionable ?

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD : Yes. We thought it should not be a mere arbitrary deduction that because a certain percentage was charged the bargain was harsh and unconscionable.

LORD MONKSWELL : As the clause at present stands it may be read disjunctively, and I think the wording could be improved.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD : It is strange that my noble friend should mention this matter. Lord Davey and myself had a discussion as to the best mode of dealing with it, and we left it to the noble Earl, the Leader of the Opposition, who is an expert, and he agreed that it should be as in this clause. But the matter is one worthy of reconsideration.

Bill reported without amendment ; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

LUNACY BILL [H.L.]

Amendments reported (according to order) ; and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

INDIAN FAMINE—RELIEF WORKS.

*LORD REAY : My Lords, I rise to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he can give any information as to the number of people engaged on relief works, receiving support in other ways ; as to the estimated expenditure and the expenditure hitherto incurred ; as to the expediency of increased outlay on irrigation works ; and as to the terms on which advances will be made to agriculturists for restocking their holdings, taking into account the mortality among cattle. My questions are prompted by feelings of sympathy which are widespread in this country for those who are stricken by the great calamity which, after such a short interval, has again fallen upon India, and also by the admiration all must feel for the way in which the Administration are meeting this renewed strain on their energies. There are some points upon which I daresay my noble friend will be able to give us information. In the first place, I should be glad if he would state what amount of relief is supplied by public works under the supervision of officers of the Public Works Department, and what amount of relief is given in so-called village works under the supervision of Civil officers, and whether a sufficient number of works had been planned before the famine broke out to fully meet the demand which on this occasion must have been very considerable indeed. The last Famine Commission, presided over by Sir James Lyall, very properly laid great stress on the preparation of plans of works beforehand, so that in case of an outbreak of famine all should be ready, and also on the utilisation of the staff of the Public Works Department in superintending these relief operations. I wish to ask next whether the classification prescribed by Sir James Lyall's Commission—namely, two broad classes of diggers of earth and carriers—has been adopted and worked satisfactorily, and whether the task allotted to the former class, which is composed of able-bodied men, and the task imposed upon the latter, which is composed of women, of children above twelve years of age, and of men who are not able-bodied, answered its purpose. A

very important suggestion made by Sir James Lyall's Commission was that the wage should be unified throughout India. To that recommendation objections are urged on account of the different local conditions prevailing in various parts of India. I believe, for instance, that in Madras they are in favour of a higher wage than that considered adequate in the North-West Provinces, and perhaps the noble Lord could tell us whether the objections have proved insuperable. During the last famine in the Central Provinces great difficulties were experienced in applying the labour test to the hill tribes, and information may, perhaps, be given whether small works were opened in the hill tracts, as suggested by the Commission. The Central Provinces are obviously the part of India more afflicted than any other on account of the severe stress of repeated bad seasons, and I think that any exceptional assistance given to the Central Provinces would be entirely justified. As regards gratuitous relief, perhaps the noble Lord will be able to give us some indication of its extent. I am fully prepared to hear that the number of those on gratuitous relief has increased. It is the natural result of a more accurate system of inspection and greater local knowledge, and also of utilising village officials who, of course, must be well acquainted with those who are in need of gratuitous relief, which, in many instances, may act as a rate-in-aid and prevent the point of absolute destitution from being reached. That undoubtedly is an argument in favour of giving gratuitous relief on rather generous lines. With regard to irrigation, Sir James Lyall's Commission urged the construction of remunerative canals in the Punjab, in Scinde, and in Upper Burma, and minor works elsewhere. I should be inclined to press for a further expenditure on wells and tanks, and also on canals in those parts of India where the tillage of the soil is not in ordinary seasons entirely dependent on irrigation, which could not yield a profit, but which would materially prevent failure of crops in a bad season. As regards advances to agriculturists, I suppose the Government will have to allow for a larger expenditure, on account of the fact that the funds which, on previous occasions, were so largely supplied by the charitable public in this country must, from the nature of the case,

Lord Reay.

be less this year than formerly, although I am very glad to see that the figure which the Mansion House Fund has already reached will convince our Indian fellow subjects that, even under the present circumstances, we are not neglectful of their needs. Those advances will, I suppose, be given in many instances for the purchase of cattle, and I trust that where that is the case great care will be taken that the money shall be used for that purpose. I think we need not grudge any outlay on famine relief when we take into consideration the fact that India is without a Poor Law and that in this country about three per cent. of the population are permanently on poor relief.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, I desire to entirely associate myself with the opening remarks of the noble Lord in deploring the great extent and unusual severity of the famine in India, which has followed so closely on the famine of 1897-98. The fact that it has followed so closely upon its predecessor makes it somewhat difficult for me to reply as fully as I could wish to the inquiries of the noble Lord, because the Government of India having made careful inquiry through the Commission presided over by Sir James Lyall, had referred the report of that Commission to the different local governments with a view to obtaining their opinion on the many points raised, and naturally they had not had the advantage of learning what their views were before this famine was upon them. Nevertheless, I can assure the noble Lord that the Government of India very highly appreciate the work done by the Commission, and that the Secretary of State has communicated to the Government of India his appreciation of their labours with an expression of the hope that they will proceed with the least delay possible to do all that they can to carry into effect the recommendations of the Commission. During the week ending 3rd March, which is the last return we have, there were 4,374,000 persons receiving relief, and, according to the latest detailed reports, for the week ending 10th February, out of that total 84½ per cent. were employed on relief works and 15½ per cent. were receiving relief in other ways. Therefore, something like 584,000 people were receiving gratuitous relief. I am not able to tell the noble Lord how far the Govern-

ment of India have been able to make a programme of public works and of village works separately for the next famine. No doubt the matter has been under consideration, but the famine came upon them so quickly that they were obliged to make use of the material they had in hand, and to complete a detailed plan was not possible. The noble Lord no doubt knows that before Sir James Lyall's Commission reported, the practice of the Famine Codes was to divide those receiving relief into four classes—namely, professional labourers who were called upon to do a full task, labourers who were not professional and who were called upon to do 75 per cent. of the full task, able-bodied men who were not labourers and who were called upon to do 50 per cent. of the full task, and, lastly, those who were able to do some work, but, being weakly, were placed in the hands of the officers in charge of the relief works, who had to decide upon the task which should be imposed. The plan of classifying those who receive relief has been altered on the recommendation of the Commission, and they are now generally divided into the following classes:—There is a special class of men who are expert labourers and who are expected to perform a task superior to that of any other class. The two other main classes consist of the diggers—the men who are able to do harder work, and the carriers—those who are able to carry materials in baskets. In addition to these there are two other classes—children who are able to carry small baskets, and, lastly, those who are dependent on the other labourers and who are not able to do anything for themselves and are receiving gratuitous relief. With regard to the question as to what has been done and the cost of the famine, the latest information we have was about the end of January, and at that time the Viceroy anticipated that the cost would be something like three or possibly four crores of rupees. Between the time of the commencement of the famine and March 31 I am sorry to say that that expenditure is likely to be considerably increased. Although we have no official estimates we are led to believe that the expenditure during the financial years of 1899 and 1900 is likely to amount to as much as, and possibly more than, five crores of rupees. Your Lordships, of course, are aware that the officers entrusted with the relief works do not discriminate

between any of those who present themselves. They are prepared to put any man on who declares that he is in need of support and sustenance, and the reluctance to take advantage of the relief works is diminishing very much in its intensity, and persons are offering their services on the relief works in much larger numbers than was the case in former famines. The noble Lord asked whether any scheme had been devised for affording relief to the hill tribes. It is extremely difficult to get at the hill tribes, who cling to their forests and jungles, and endeavour to support themselves on their own fruits and wild roots; but at any rate in the Presidency of Bombay something has been done in the direction of employing the starving hill tribes to procure and cut fodder for the cattle which in other parts of Bombay are starving for the want of fodder. A very large sum of money indeed has been expended on irrigation, and there has been a very good return for the capital so invested. There are some very extensive works in the Punjab and Scinde, which are estimated to cost something like Rs.9,750,000. Those projects have not, of course, been put into operation in the short time that has elapsed between the last and the present famine; but at any rate something has been done in the direction of carrying out the recommendations of the Commissioners in that respect. As to the terms on which advances will be made to agriculturists for restocking their holdings, there are already in existence, as the noble Lord knows, Acts enabling the Government to make advances to agriculturists for the purchase of plough cattle and seed grains, and for the improvement of agricultural property. That, of course, is receiving the attention of the Government of India, and when the proper season arrives steps will no doubt be taken for facilitating such advances where needed. Something like a surplus of Rs.50,000 was left over from the funds subscribed for the former famine, which will, of course, be applied to the needs of the present famine. The noble Lord and those who so liberally contributed to those funds will be glad to know that something like 71 per cent. of the whole was spent in giving a fresh start in life to those who had either eaten their seed grains or sold or lost by death their plough cattle. In addition to that the Government advanced over Rs.1,000,000 in 1896.

and 1897 for the sinking of wells, the purchase of seed and plough cattle, and other purposes, whilst the Forest Department has done all in its power to throw open the forests for the grazing of cattle. I regret to say that the present famine is without a parallel in the history of India. When the last one occurred it was believed to be the greatest that had ever been experienced, but this one has left it far behind, and I fear will stand as a record. Fortunately, however, we were forearmed to meet these calamities. The extension of the railway system throughout India has enabled us to reach all parts of the affected area; but the natural consequence of the existence of the railway, of course, is that the price of grain food in different parts of the country is assimilated, and therefore, although there is not the same danger of acute suffering in particular localities, there is a general raising of the price of food throughout all parts of India. The Government of India are fully alive to the need for increased vigilance, and there is no danger that discrimination in granting relief will not be exercised. I think I have answered all the questions put to me. If there is any other information he may desire the Secretary of State will be only too glad to afford it to the noble Lord, who takes so great an interest in India, in which country he occupied so distinguished a position some years ago.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—CUSTODY OF PRISONERS.

***LORD LOCH:** I have been asked by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War to postpone the question of which I had given notice—namely: "To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can give any assurance that the Boer prisoners, now amounting to several thousands, will not be interned in places in proximity to the Dutch districts of the Cape Colony or in any considerable numbers in the Cape peninsula." I propose to again place the question upon the Notice Paper at a very early date, as I think it is desirable that we should have without delay some information on the subject to which the question refers. I may observe that the question affects political as well as military considerations, and I trust, and presume, that Sir Alfred Milner will be consulted on the subject.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six of the Clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten of the Clock.

The Earl of Onslow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 5th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely:—

Latimer Road and Acton Railway Bill.
Midland Railway Bill.
Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill.
Wolverhampton Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 67 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 67 has been complied with, namely:—

Newry, Keady, and Tynan Light Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

BRITISH GAS LIGHT COMPANY (STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERIES) BILL.

CHARING CROSS, EUSTON, AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY BILL.

CITY AND SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

JARROW AND HEBBURN ELECTRICITY SUPPLY BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the United Presbyterian Synod on Disestablishment, against; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Standish ; Grangetown ; and South Skelton ; to lie upon the Table.

OWNERS' SITE VALUES.

Petition from St. Leonard, Shoreditch, for alteration of law ; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845.

Petition from Whitburn, for alteration of law ; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Tuxford Hall ; Bradford ; and Beeston ; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Broomfield ; London ; and West Hartlepool ; to lie upon the Table.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Petition from Ramsbottom, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Middlesbrough (three) ; Honing ; Broomfield ; Southampton ; Hartlepool ; Sneinton ; Ipswich ; and Rusholme ; to lie upon the Table.

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS.

Petition from West Bromwich, for alteration of law ; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 20th February ; *Mr. John Morley*] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 81.]

WESTERN AUSTRALIA (CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT ACT, 1899).

Copy presented, of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899, of Western Australia [by Act] to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 82.]

WESTERN AUSTRALIA (ELECTORAL ACT, 1899).

Copy presented, of the Electoral Act, 1899, of Western Australia [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 83.]

TREATY SERIES (No. 5, 1900).

Copy presented, of Procès-Verbal recording the accession of the Russian Empire to the Cape Spartel International Lighthouse Convention of 31st May, 1865. Signed at Tangier, 31st May, 1899 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 2386 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON ACT, 1898.

Copy presented, of Report to accompany Statutes and Regulations made by the Commissioners appointed under the University of London Act, 1898, together with an Appendix of Correspondence [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1900-1901).

Copy ordered, "of Statement of Revenue and Expenditure as laid before the House by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Copy presented accordingly ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 84.]

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—USE OF EXPLOSIVE BULLETS.

MR. ORR-EWING (Ayr Burghs) : I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Transvaal Republic became subsequently an acceding party to the Declaration signed at St. Petersburg on 11th December, 1868, between Great Britain, Austria, Bavaria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Persia, Portugal, Prussia and the North German Confederation, Russia, Sweden and Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, and Württemberg, by which the contracting parties engaged to renounce in case of war among themselves the employment

by their troops of explosive bullets; and, if not, whether, considering Great Britain has adhered to the above engagement, and that such Declaration is by its terms not binding in a war with a non-acceding Power, any protest can be made by the other signatories of the Declaration against the employment of explosive bullets by the Boers as officially reported.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have to say, in answer to my hon. friend, that Her Majesty's Government are not aware of the Transvaal Government having acceded to the Declaration of St. Petersburg, signed in 1868, on the subject of the use of explosive bullets in war. The Declaration does not provide for any protest on the part of the signatory Powers in the event referred to by my hon. friend.

TRANSVAAL PROPERTY AND WAR TAXES.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, having regard to the recent proclamation by the Government to the effect that any attempted dealings with property in the Transvaal for non-payment of war tax or otherwise to the prejudice of British subjects would not be recognised by our Government so far as regards such impositions made since the outbreak of the present hostilities, whether this proclamation or its principle would apply to any action taken by the Transvaal Government in respect of the non-payment of the war tax which was imposed on landowners prior to the outbreak of hostilities, but not paid by them in consequence of the Colonial Office having given the opinion in writing on 20th May last, that it was a breach of the London Convention of 1884; and whether British owners of land in the Transvaal, who have paid the war taxes under protest and under threats of forfeiture of such lands by the Transvaal Government, will have their rights to recover back such war taxes saved.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have received no representations that farms have been confiscated for non-payment of war tax prior to the outbreak of the war. Any confiscation subsequent to October 10th is

covered by the notice of 26th January. Her Majesty's Government were advised subsequent to the outbreak of the war that in view of the arguments put forward on behalf of the South African Republic their protest could not be maintained on the grounds originally taken, and they cannot therefore pledge themselves in the matter.

ARMY COMMISSIONS — PROMOTIONS FROM THE RANKS.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state the number of appointments to first commissions in the Army made during the past six months, and how many of these were promotions from the ranks.

***THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE** (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.) (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The total number of appointments to first commissions is 835, and of promotions from the ranks is eighty-four.

PROBABLE FORCE NECESSARY TO GARRISON SOUTH AFRICA AFTER THE WAR.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what is the amount of the reduced force to be maintained in South Africa after the 30th September for which provision is made in the Estimates.

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS** (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The Estimates were framed on the basis of making full provision for the war charges up to the 30th September, and half provision for the remainder of the year; and not upon a calculation of the precise number of men likely to be present in South Africa after the 30th September.

NICHOLSON'S NEK ENGAGEMENT—LIST OF PRISONERS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can say if Private Francis Martin, No. 5108, Royal Irish Fusiliers, was amongst the number taken prisoners at Nicholson's Nek; and, if so, whether he can say where he is now; and when it is intended to publish the list of those taken prisoners in that battle.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): A list of the Royal Irish Fusiliers who were missing after Nicholson's Nek will be called for, now that Ladysmith has been relieved; and the hon. Member will be communicated with.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE AT THE FRONT.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he has any objection to give the names of the hon. Members of this House who are alleged to be at the front, the regiments to which they are attached, and the capacities in which they are serving; and whether any of those hon. Members have been engaged in actual fighting; were any of them wounded or taken prisoners; and, if so, when or where were they in battle.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): A Return is now being prepared in the terms of the address moved by my hon. friend the Member for the Stratford-on-Avon Division of Warwickshire, which will give the hon. Member most of the information for which he asks. It will not be feasible to include the details referred to in the second paragraph of the question, but the hon. Member may rest assured that wherever the hon. Members referred to are serving, they are doing their duty.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will the Return apply to the two hon. Members for Sheffield, who are missing, and whose whereabouts are unknown?

TRANSPORT—HORSES—PROVISION OF VETERINARY SURGEONS.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state whether, at the beginning of the South African War, several ships containing large numbers of horses were sent out without a veterinary surgeon on board; and what was the result of this course; and whether any steps have been taken to provide each horse transport ship with a veterinary surgeon.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Eleven ships containing horses were despatched before the 16th November, without veterinary surgeons; the numbers of horses on board were not large and a specially selected farrier-quartermaster-sergeant or sergeant farrier

was sent on each vessel. The percentage of deaths on board, excluding the "Isomore," which sank, was 4.54. Since the 16th November a veterinary surgeon has been placed on each horse transport leaving the United Kingdom with regular units or remounts.

COST OF TRANSPORT.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War why has a large proportion of the liabilities for sea transport incurred during the present financial year, as stated at page 6 of the Secretary of State's Memorandum, been placed on the Estimates of next year, instead of being inserted under that head in the recent Supplementary Army Estimate.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Payments for sea transport are made partly in advance as the ships are taken up, and partly in arrear. The Supplementary Estimate covers so much of the liabilities as we expect to discharge during the current financial year.

ARTILLERY—DEFECTIVE FIELD GUNS.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it has been brought to his notice that some of the field artillery guns at the front in South Africa have recently been found defective from corrosion caused by the use of cordite; and whether any steps are being taken to rapidly replace these guns.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Spare guns have been sent out to replace any which may be found defective. It is not the case that cordite has a "corrosive" effect, although the constant use of the gun, whether with cordite or any other explosives, will in time wear out the tube.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): Does not cordite cause erosion of the barrel of the gun?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I was asked if it had any corrosive effect, and my answer was "No."

LEE-METFORD RIFLE.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the muzzle velocity of the

Lee-Metford rifle is inferior to all rifles in the hands of European Powers; that the alleged irregular qualities of the cordite powder, the way in which the Lee-Metfords are sighted, and the complicated reloading, have been repeatedly evidenced in the course of the present war; whether the English rifle and ammunition are each heavier than the United States Navy, the German Mauser, and the Männlicher weapons; and whether, as stated, it has the worst trajectory, the least penetration, the slowest fire once the magazine is emptied, the weakest breech bolt, least rigid woodwork, the worst trigger-pull, and worst sights compared with the above-mentioned rifles; and if it is the most expensive of any service weapon.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The replies to paragraphs 1 and 3 of the question are in the negative. In regard to the second paragraph our rifle is heavier than some and lighter than other magazine rifles; there are many patterns of Männlichers and Mausers. Our ammunition is rather lighter than the average ammunition of other nations.

YEOMANRY UNIFORMS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he has received any complaints as to the inferior quality of the uniform supplied to the Yeomanry; whether the reason given by the contractor was that the price was cut too low, and what is the name of the contracting firm.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): I am informed by the Yeomanry Committee that there has been little or no complaint as to the khaki and as to the greatcoats. There have been complaints as to the Bedford or velveteen cord. No contracts were made for these supplies. The firms employed by the Yeomanry Committee stated that it was virtually impossible to obtain the required quantities of the best material within the time specified. The difficulty seems to have been one of time rather than of price.

VOLUNTEERS—EXPENSES OF TRAINING.

MR. COLSTON (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary

of State for War whether he is aware that Volunteer service companies, for whom there was no room in barracks during their period of training, were put to heavy expense to secure suitable lodgings; and whether he sees his way to put them on the same footing financially as those who had barrack accommodation provided for them.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): As Volunteer service companies are treated in the same way as Regular soldiers, no more than ordinary rates have been sanctioned. The Secretary of State for War is, however, prepared to consider any special cases in which it can be shown that the Volunteer corps have been put to expense.

VOLUNTEERS — STATISTICS OF MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will state the number of Volunteers who have submitted themselves to medical examination prior to service in South Africa, the number rejected on account of bad teeth, and the number rejected for other reasons.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): No Returns on this matter are available.

BEDFORD MOUNTED INFANTRY.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it has been brought to his notice that the mounted company of the Bedford Regiment, 100 strong, were upon arrival in South Africa supplied with only fifteen horses, which horses were afterwards taken from them, and they were consequently obliged to march to the front in their riding kit; and what steps, if any, have since been taken to mount these men.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The Secretary of State for War has no knowledge of the matter referred to. I may, however, explain that the clothing of mounted infantry has been designed so as to admit of the men being used as foot soldiers.

SOLDIERS' MARRIAGES — MAINTENANCE OF FAMILIES—SEPARATION ALLOWANCES.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for

War whether he is aware that soldiers who marry without leave, when they fulfil the requirements of having £5 in the savings bank, seven years service, and two good conduct badges, which qualify to be placed on the marriage roll, cannot be put on it without the sanction of the general officer commanding, and provided there is a vacancy, and no qualified applicant for leave to marry exists; whether, in view of the exceptional trial the war has cast upon the wives of soldiers, he will inquire whether there are any who, having married without leave, now fulfil these requirements, and yet have not been able to be put on the roll owing to want of vacancies; and whether he can see his way to relax these conditions as regards the deposit in the savings bank, the length of service, and number of good conduct badges, so as to extend separation allowances to many deserving wives of soldiers now debarred by this regulation.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): I beg at the same time to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the distress which has been caused by the war to the wives and families of many soldiers married without leave, the Government will make an exception in favour of men married without leave who are on active service, and grant their wives separation allowances during the time their husbands are serving at the front.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): This question is engaging the attention of the Secretary of State, whose decision will not long be delayed. Meanwhile it is not likely that any deserving wives of the soldiers referred to will fail to obtain assistance from one or other of the funds existing for the purpose.

MR. GALLOWAY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what is the weekly cost of housing and maintaining the families of officers and of soldiers married with and without leave; and what proof is required by the War Office from officers or soldiers of the sufficiency of their private means to maintain a family.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): It is not possible to state with accuracy the cost referred to in the

first paragraph of the question. No proof is required of sufficiency of private means in the case of officers or of non-commissioned officers including the rank of sergeant. In the case of ranks below that of sergeant, men admitted to the married establishment are required to show that they have to their credit a sum of £5 in the savings bank.

REMOUNT DEPARTMENT—IRISH HORSES.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, with a view to procure serviceable horses for the Army, he will suggest to the War Office the desirability of employing local agents to purchase remounts in the south of Ireland.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): No, Sir. It is not considered expedient; the staff of the Remount Department is ample for the purpose.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Can the hon. Gentleman say why the practice followed in the north of Ireland cannot be adopted in the south of Ireland—I mean the practice of employing local agents to purchase horses?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I always understood there was a great deal of difference between the north and south of Ireland.

ARTILLERY—THE REDUCTION IN 1887.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, when the present Commander-in-Chief was Adjutant General at the War Office in 1887, he advised, recommended, or approved of the reduction of the Royal Horse Artillery in that year.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Lord Wolseley was Adjutant General in 1887, but I cannot admit the right of the hon. Member to demand information as to the advice tendered at that, or at any other time, by the members of the Headquarters Staff. The Secretary of State for the time being was responsible for the action taken.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: Are we to understand that the War Office objects to tracing home any personal responsibility?

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Mr. WYNDHAM): I have been in the
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**VOLUNTEERS—EXPENSES
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MR. COLSTON (Gloucester
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*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. and gallant Member is now arguing the question.

FRENCH QUICK-FIRING FIELD GUNS.

MAJOR RASCH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the new French quick-firing field gun, with hydro-pneumatic brake and spade trail; whether it is contended that twenty rounds per minute have been fired, with shrapnel and common shell; and if the gun is protected by a steel shield.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): I do not think it would be desirable to make public the information received by the War Office upon such matters as this, but the hon. Member may rest assured that the attention of the Secretary of State for War is directed to all reported improvements in the artillery of other countries.

ARTILLERY—INDIAN FIELD GUNS.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the practice of making a 5½-in. howitzer for use in India and a 5-in. howitzer for use in the United Kingdom and the colonies is still persisted in; whether the military advisers of the War Office have sanctioned the use in two branches of Her Majesty's land service of two weapons differing in calibre by half an inch only, but the ammunition of which is not interchangeable; whether the War Office sanctioned the adoption of a different type of gun for Indian service; and whether there is any Minister of the Crown, officer, Committee, or other authority which has power to insist upon uniformity when the War Office and the India Office cannot agree.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The British 5-in. howitzer and the Indian 5·4-in. howitzer are weapons intended for different purposes, the former being primarily a mobile field howitzer drawn by horses, and throwing a 50-lb. shell, the latter a siege howitzer drawn by oxen and throwing a 60-lb. shell. As the latter weapon is designed to meet special Indian requirements, the War Office sees no occasion to press the objections which might have been raised to the adoption of two different patterns

of howitzer. In the event of disagreement between the War Office and India Office the point in dispute would be referred to the Defence Committee of the Cabinet.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: As a matter of fact, was there a disagreement at the time these guns were sanctioned between the India Office and the War Office?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I do not know that to be a fact, Sir.

RIFLE PRACTICE.

COLONEL WYNDHAM MURRAY (Bath): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether measures will be taken to further improve the rifle shooting of the Regular and Auxiliary infantry of the Army; whether the present system of training in drill and of military duties will be altered to enable the soldier to have more constant practice in combined rifle shooting and judging distance under as nearly as possible service conditions; and whether a military committee will be appointed to report on this subject.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): These questions are under consideration, but I am not at present in a position to make a statement with regard to them.

RIFLE RANGES.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if his attention has been directed to the fact that while county councils have power to purchase land for rifle ranges they cannot hire land or spend their funds on erecting butts or screens or otherwise making ranges safe for shooting; and if he will consider the desirability of extending the provisions of the Military Lands Act so as to enable the local authorities to assist the Volunteer corps to procure ranges more effectually than they can do at present.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): A clause giving permission to county councils to erect butts or screens for the benefit of volunteer corps was originally contained in the Military Lands Bill, 1892, when introduced, but was opposed on the Second Reading and in Committee, and was dropped. The Secretary of State is considering whether

further legislation in this direction would be expedient.

VOLUNTEERS — RETIREMENT OF COMMANDING OFFICERS.

MR. HARRY S. SAMUEL (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is the intention of the War Office to insist on the retirement of all Volunteer commanding officers appointed prior to 1896 during the present year, in accordance with the Order issued during 1896; and in the event of this order being relaxed, will they specially omit from any relaxation all officers who were in any way concerned with the buying and selling of honorary colonelcies, which occurred some three years ago.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): From the 1st November, 1896, all Volunteer commands were limited to four years, but general officers commanding districts have the power of recommending extensions which may not exceed four years. Such cases are very carefully investigated, and no extension is granted unless the officer is considered worthy of it.

OBSOLETE WAR SHIPS.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he will state which of the older ships besides the "Warrior," the "Boadicea," the "Belle Isle," and the "Black Prince" are to be at once struck off the list.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I have no further statement to make on this matter at present.

NAVAL CONTRACTS—SHIPBUILDING.

MR. FIRBANK (Hull, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, having regard to the admitted inability of his Department to complete the authorised expenditure for the year for shipbuilding, and having regard to the fact that many shipbuilding firms of high standing are without any orders at the present time, he would consider the expediency of giving some of those firms an opportunity of carrying out a portion of the authorised work, in view of the fact of the efforts which foreign Powers are

making at the present time to increase their naval strength.

MR. GOSCHEN: Certainly they will have an opportunity. There are only two or three large shipbuilding firms capable of constructing battleships or armoured cruisers, which are, without Admiralty orders at the present time; all the others have large orders. These firms will have the same opportunity as others to carry out a portion of the authorised work, and I shall be very glad if they will avail themselves of it.

EASTERN EXTENSION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received protests from the Canadian and New Zealand Governments against the concessions recently granted to the Eastern Extension Company in Australia as being likely to militate seriously against the financial success of the Pacific Cable in which the Imperial, the Canadian, and the Australasian Governments are joint partners; whether, in view of these protests, it would still be possible to revoke the concessions and prevent any further complications of a like character; and whether he has received a reply to his message to the Australian Governments on the subject.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have received protests of the nature described, from Canada and New Zealand. I am informed by the Government of New South Wales that no arrangement has yet been concluded with the Eastern Extension Company, though it is aware that the decision of the recent conference of Premiers was generally favourable to the proposals of the company.

CHINA—TRADE ON THE WEST RIVER.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what progress has been made in China towards the full opening to trade of the West River, and of rivers generally.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): It is impossible within the limits of an answer to a question to give a complete account of the position; but the reports from Her

Majesty's Consuls included in the Papers now being prepared for Parliament contain full information on the subject. According to the latest information, trade is steadily increasing on the West River.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if it is not the fact that Nanning-fu, which was declared to be open as a treaty port in February last year, still remains unopened; and whether the Government have taken any steps to secure the immediate opening of the port?

*MR. BRODRICK: I must ask for notice.

RUSSIA AND PERSIAN RAILWAYS— BUNDER ABBAS.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have given attention to the statements to the effect that the Russian Government has already commenced the construction in Persia of the Zulfa-Tabriz-Hamadan line of railway, with a branch to Teheran, and which is to terminate at Bunder Abbas at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, and that several officers of the general staff have been instructed to watch over the works, having under their orders several regiments of Cossacks; whether Her Majesty's Government are informed that Persia will grant to Russia the port of Bunder Abbas on the same terms as those under which Port Arthur has been leased to Russia by China, and that it is the intention of Russia to construct a military port and a dockyard, fortified or otherwise, at Bunder Abbas; and whether Her Majesty's Government have made, or propose to make, any representations on this subject to the Government of Russia or of Persia.

*MR. BRODRICK: Her Majesty's Government have received no information tending to confirm these statements, and have no grounds for making representations to the Russian Government in regard to them.

RUSSIA AND THE AMIR OF BOKHARA.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Amir of Bokhara has

ceded to Russia free of cost extensive tracts of land in the upper courses of the Oxus, to be used for farming settlements for colonists from European Russia, and has also given permission to Russia to construct military stations for its Central Asian troops, and the right to establish fortified stations on the frontier of Afghanistan.

*MR. BRODRICK: Her Majesty's Government have received no information to this effect, but it is within the competence of the Amir of Bokhara to make such arrangements as he may deem fit on these points.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is the Government destitute of all information whatever?

MAURITIUS GARRISON.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is intended that the two Native Indian regiments provided for the garrison of Mauritius are to form part of the permanent regimental establishment to be borne on the Army Estimates.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): It is impossible to say at present whether the arrangement will prove to be a permanent or only a temporary one.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with reference to his statement on the 22nd ultimo* that the British Central African natives lately stationed in Mauritius were returning to Africa, whether they have by this time reached their own country; and, if not, whether they are still on board ship.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: They are still on board ship.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON: Where are they going to?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I must ask for notice.

INDIA — SCOTTISH PRESBYTERIANS AND THE USE OF THE CHURCHES.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxix., p. 900.

State for India whether he has come to any decision in regard to the claim of the Church of Scotland that Presbyterian soldiers in India shall share in the use of churches built at the public cost for Protestants, and that such use shall be regulated by some other authority than the Bishops of the Church of England.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have been in communication with the Government of India on the subject referred to in my right hon. friend's question, and propose to present papers to Parliament as soon as my despatch has reached the Viceroy.

INEBRIATES' REFORMATORIES.

MR. HOBHOUSE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether county councils can combine for the management as well as the establishment of certified inebriate reformatories, and whether joint committees of such councils can be formed for the purpose of management; and if he proposes to make any regulations for boards of management.

***THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT** (SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The power conferred on county councils by Section 9, Sub-section (1) of the Inebriates Act, 1898, to combine for the establishment or maintenance of a certified reformatory seems to me to include management, and I think this would be a matter of common interest in respect of which county councils might appoint joint committees under Section 81 of the Local Government Act, 1888. The regulations which I have made prescribing the duties of managers would apply to boards of management, though in special circumstances they might need to be modified. I shall be ready to consider carefully any proposal for joint action by county councils, which is a thing to be encouraged.

LONDON OMNIBUSES — TICKET EXAMINERS.

***MR. T. B. CURRAN** (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that annoyance is caused to omnibus passengers in London through ticket examiners mounting omnibuses and demanding to see the travellers' tickets;

and whether these examiners are legally entitled to enforce their demand; and, if not, would he see his way to issue regulations to put a stop to this practice.

***SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY:** The police have only received since 1892 four complaints of the practice referred to, which whether or not it could be legally enforced does not appear to me to be an unreasonable one when exercised in a proper manner. In any case I have no power to interfere with it.

SCOTTISH PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether any applications have been made under Section 1 of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899; what is their number and nature; whether the Chairmen of Committees of the two Houses have had occasion to take action under Section 2 of the same Act; and whether any action has been taken under Sections 4 and 5 as to the formation of extra Parliamentary or Parliamentary Panels; and in that case will he furnish the House with the names of such Commissioners.

***THE LORD ADVOCATE** (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The hon. Member is under a misapprehension. The Act does not come into effect for the purposes mentioned by the hon. Member until the end of the present session of Parliament, and no action in the matters dealt with in the question can be taken until then.

COWDENBEATH COMMISSIONERS' ELECTION.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland has received from ratepayers resident in the borough of Cowdenbeath, Fifeshire, complaints of irregularities in connection with the recent election of the Cowdenbeath Burgh Commissioners, and will he say what action he proposes to take in the matter.

***MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY:** A complaint alleging the commission of irregularities at the burgh elections at Cowdenbeath in 1899 was received by the Secretary for Scotland. The complainants were informed that the Secretary for Scotland had no jurisdiction, and that

their remedy was by petition to the court. It would be impossible to do away with irregularities by special legislation, nor do those alleged seem to call for it. It is not proposed to take any further action in the matter.

POST OFFICE — TELEGRAPHIC DELAYS.

MR. A. G. H. GIBBS (London): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware of the delays which have occurred in the transmission of telegrams from Russia, Scandinavia, and Northern Europe generally, via Newcastle, during the last fortnight, as a result of which telegrams by this route have reached London mainly after business hours, a delay which has been the cause of loss and dislocation of business by this route, and what is the cause of this delay, and when it is expected the service will return to its normal condition.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): These delays were caused by the breakdown of the telegraph lines by the recent snowstorm, which was of an extremely severe character, and the effects of which were most seriously felt in the north-east of England and in Scotland. During the interruption of the ordinary routes telegrams for the north of Europe were, as far as practicable, transmitted via Germany, the delay varying from twenty minutes to about two hours. The normal condition of the service has now been restored.

CHIEF TELEGRAPH OFFICE, LONDON— CASE OF D. W. JONES.

MR. KIMBER: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether Mr. D. W. Jones, a telegraph clerk with twenty years service, stationed at the Chief Office, London, has been threatened with superannuation, the reason assigned by the official medical officer being five single day absences last year; whether he is aware that Dr. Farrar, of Putney, certified that Jones was suffering from nervous disorder, and that a complete change of air was necessary; and will he explain why the official doctor disregarded the certificate and ignored the recommendation of Dr. Farrar, although making no examination of the patient; and whether

the Postmaster General will investigate the case with a view of securing more lenient treatment to men of long and good records.

MR. HANBURY: There has been no question of superannuating Jones. When Jones forwarded Dr. Farrar's certificate of the 23rd January, recommending a week's leave, he was allowed sick leave for the whole period so recommended. He stated that he did not see his way clear to act on the advice given by Dr. Farrar that he should take a change of air, but asked permission to do so later on when convenient to himself. He was instructed to see the medical officer of the Department before going away. He resumed duty, however, on February 1st.

TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION WITH DUNDEE.

*SIR J. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that there has been no telephonic communication between Dundee, Montrose, and Aberdeen for the last fortnight; whether this is consequent on the telephone wire being used for telegraph messages; whether contractors for the use of the telephone will be compensated for their loss of service; and when the telephonic communication in this district will be renewed.

MR. HANBURY: On three days, the 16th, 17th, and 18th February, a section, between Montrose and Aberdeen, of the trunk telephone line from Dundee to Aberdeen was used in making up telegraph circuits from Aberdeen to Edinburgh and Dundee. The telephone line was at the time broken down south of Montrose; and if the uninjured section had not been used in the manner described, Aberdeen would have been entirely cut off from telegraphic communication with the south. There are no contracts or agreements to which the Postmaster General is a party for the general use of the trunk wire system. The acceptance of each message is a separate transaction as in the case of an ordinary postal telegram, and no person is entitled to compensation on account of an interruption of the service. The restoration of the Dundee-Aberdeen trunk line was completed and the line brought into use on the 2nd instant.

MEMBERS' TELEGRAMS.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that telegrams arriving at the House of Commons directed to Members after 7.30 p.m. on Wednesdays are returned to the West Strand Office; that such telegrams are thus delayed in delivery about fourteen hours; and whether he could arrange that such telegrams, at least during the present anxiety for news from the front, should be accepted and redirected to Members' private addresses without delay.

MR. HANBURY: After 7.30 p.m. on Wednesdays, telegrams in respect of which no special instructions have been given by Members to the Postmaster of the House of Commons are not sent to the House of Commons at all, but are dealt with at the West Strand Office, where measures are taken to have them posted to the private addresses of Members. Unfortunately these measures have sometimes failed to get the telegrams included in the first morning delivery, but the Postmaster General has now given instructions which will secure their inclusion in this delivery in future.

DAIRY PRODUCE—"PRESUMPTIVE STANDARDS OF QUALITY."

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether any and what steps have been taken by the Board of Agriculture, in exercise of the power conferred by Section 4 of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1899, upon the Board, to set up presumptive standards of quality in respect of milk, cream, butter, and cheese.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): No regulations under the section referred to have as yet been made, but I have appointed a Departmental Committee, of which Lord Wenlock is the Chairman, to consider whether any such regulations can with advantage be made in respect of milk and cream, and upon the report of the Committee the further action to be taken will to a great extent depend.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE REGULATIONS.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the President of the Board of

Agriculture whether he is now prepared to frame regulations for the purpose of meeting the case of small farmers and others who may require, as a matter of urgency, to send a cow to a neighbouring farm and back for stock purposes.

*MR. LONG: By an order which comes into operation to-day facilities for the movement of stock for breeding purposes will be afforded in certain portions of the scheduled district, which will, I think, meet the case to which the hon. Member refers.

EDUCATION—CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can see his way to renew the instruction to Her Majesty's inspectors requiring records to be kept in the logbooks of elementary schools of all cases of the infliction of corporal punishment, which instruction was, as stated by him, withdrawn in 1891 without reason assigned or representations made; and whether he is aware that infants of three and four years of age have been caned in elementary schools.

MR. GRAY (West Ham, N.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers may I ask a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether in the opinion of the Education Department many objectionable forms of punishment which were encouraged by the rule in question have not been abandoned since the rule was withdrawn?

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): The statement made by me was that no record of the reasons and representations now exists, not that no reasons were ever assigned and no representations ever made. But the suggestion of the hon. Member shall receive careful consideration when the instructions to inspectors are issued, as they will be shortly. Canes are, I regret to say, used in some infant schools. In regard to the supplemental question, I cannot say that the Committee of Council are of opinion that any such beneficial results have followed from the dropping of the regulation.

CHURCH COPPENHALL BOARD SCHOOL, CREWE.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can state if the parish almanack containing announcements that confessions were received every Sunday evening, asserting the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession of the clergy of the Church of England, advocating prayers for the dead, and deprecating the use of the word Protestant as applied to the Church of England, still continues to be affixed to the wall inside of the board school of Church Coppenhall, Crewe; and whether certain board schools have been threatened with withdrawal of the grant if they used the Church Catechism; and if so, whether it is consistent with the rules of the Education Department for such an almanack to be openly displayed in the Church Coppenhall Board School.

SIR J. GORST: I have been informed by the rector of the parish that (1) the almanack was never put up on school board premises; (2) it was put up for Sunday use only in premises leased to the board on five days in the week; (3) the rector publicly stated some days ago that as chairman of the board he had ordered its removal during day school hours. I can add nothing to the statement I have already made that the Committee of Council does not appear to have any jurisdiction over the almanack.

EDUCATIONAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE.

SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether it is proposed that the National Union of Teachers should be represented on the Consultative Committee about to be formed under Section 4 of the Education Act of 1899; and, if so, whether there will also be provided adequate representation for the National Society and the Associations of Voluntary Schools.

SIR J. GORST: It is not intended that either the National Union of Teachers or any other outside association shall be expressly represented upon the Consultative Committee.

"STOP THE WAR" MEETING AT EXETER HALL, 2ND MARCH, 1900.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether his attention has been called to certain incitements to riot and breach of the peace; and whether he will call the attention of the Public Prosecutor to the matter.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): My attention has not been called to any incitement to riot or breach of the peace, but the hon. Baronet has been good enough to send me an extract from the *Sun* newspaper. In my opinion the paragraph does not fall within that description, and certainly there was nothing that would justify my directing any action on the part of the Public Prosecutor.

IRISH TRAIN SERVICE — IRREGULARITIES.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he will cause inquiry to be made as to the inconvenience caused to the public at large, particularly the people of Sligo and neighbouring towns, by the irregularities as to the trains belonging to the Midland Great Western, the Sligo, Leitrim, and Northern, and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Companies, those trains being often from ten to sixty minutes late on arrival at Sligo terminus.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I can only direct the attention of these railway companies to the complaint of inconvenience contained in the hon. Member's question, and this has been done.

IRISH RAILWAY AMALGAMATION BILLS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to a letter addressed by the Irish Board of Works to the Limerick Harbour Board, warning that body not to incur any expense in connection with the opposition to the Great Southern and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill now before Parliament without the consent of the Board of Works, whether he is aware that the promoters of the Amalgamation Bill have been circu-

lating a report that the Board of Works is in favour of their Bill; whether he is aware that the Limerick Corporation, Limerick Harbour Board, and all other representative bodies in Limerick City, are representing the wishes of the citizens in opposing the proposed amalgamation; whether he is aware that the Limerick Harbour Board is a solvent body fully able to meet its liabilities; and whether he will see that no further action is taken in this matter by the Board of Works which might interfere in any way with the right of the Limerick Harbour Board to influence Parliament in opposition to a Bill now awaiting its consideration.

*MR. HANBURY: I have no knowledge of any reports circulated by the promoters of the Amalgamation Bill, but the action of the Board of Works with regard to it has been confined to, protecting its own interests, firstly as mortgagee, and secondly as the protector of certain State aided railways. I do not know whether all representative bodies are joining in this opposition, or how far their action either way represents the wishes of the citizens. The solvency of the Harbour Board is not questioned. The Board of Works have a considerable interest in the expenditure of the Harbour Board, because all its surplus revenue is applied to reducing the principal of one of their loans, and accordingly I do not propose to interfere with their action.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is aware that only last session the Chief Secretary for Ireland met a deputation of all the representative bodies, who stated their views to him? And with regard to the question of solvency, is it not the fact that this Harbour Board has not only paid up all the instalments of interest due but has reduced its capital debt by £36,000? And if that be so, what is the special reason which called for this warning this year and not last?

*MR. HANBURY: One reason is that they spent so much money last year that they cannot afford it this year.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I rise—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must not persist in arguing.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I shall refer to the question again.

TELEPHONES IN COUNTY CORK.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether steps will be taken by the postal authorities to provide telephonic communication between Macroom, Coachford, Crookstown, and Cork; and, if so, how soon will it be in working order, and by what route will it be laid.

MR. HANBURY: There are no local telephone exchanges at Macroom, Coachford, and Crookstown, and no application has been made for trunk wire extensions. The very small amount of business which could be expected would not justify the Postmaster General in providing telephone trunk wire communication with these places except under guarantee. There are already public telegraph offices in all three places.

THE MURDER OF MR. BIRD AT BANTRY.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a meeting of the United Irish League, held in Bantry on Sunday the 18th February, when, in the course of his speech, Mr. William O'Brien stated that alien landlordism has left the marks of its bloodstained fingers on the necks of an oppressed and suffering people, and that he advocated the destruction of landlordism and the ending of the rent office, and asked what had been gained by patience and quietness; whether he is aware that, on the Saturday of the same week, Mr. William Bird, J.P., a landowner and rent agent, was murdered in his office at Bantry; and whether it is the intention of the Government to take any action with respect to meetings of the United Irish League.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, may I ask whether he is aware that many of the Unionist Members are pledged to the abolition of landlordism on the terms advocated by Mr. William O'Brien—namely, by compulsory purchase—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the question on the Paper.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): My attention has been called

to the meeting referred to. According to the report published in the *Freeman's Journal* newspaper, dated February 19th, Mr. William O'Brien appears to have used language substantially to the purport and effect mentioned. The answer to the second paragraph is in the affirmative. A man has been arrested charged with the commission of the crime, and the investigation into his case is now proceeding. Under these circumstances I must abstain from expressing any opinion as to the alleged connection between the occurrences mentioned in the first paragraph and the crime. The Government have prevented, and will continue to prevent, meetings being held under the auspices of the United Irish League when there was, or in the future may be, reasonable ground for believing that the meetings, if held, would lead to intimidation or a breach of the peace.

IRISH LAND SALES—RAE ESTATE, COUNTY KERRY.

SIR T. G. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can give the reason for the delay in carrying out the sale to the tenants of the Rae Estate at Keel, County Kerry, and when the sale will be completed.

MR. ATKINSON: The delay arose owing to the fact that the owners and incumbrancers had entered into negotiations for the discharge of the Receiver and the dismissal of the petition for sale of the estate. The solicitor having carriage of the proceedings has informed the Registrar of the Land Judge's Court that an arrangement has been arrived at in the matter, and that an application for the purpose mentioned will shortly be made to the Court.

DUBLIN STUDENTS AND THE CIVIC FLAG.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a number of students in Dublin attacked the Mansion House and tore down the civic flag on 1st March; and that this is the second time in a few months that attacks of this kind have been made; and what steps are to be taken to protect the Mansion House of Dublin from such attacks.

MR. ATKINSON: I am informed that on the 1st instant a number of students obtained access to the Mansion House grounds by climbing over the garden wall, and that they then lowered the civic flag and threw it into the adjoining street. The police, however, quickly arrived on the scene and restored the flag to the Mansion House. Several arrests were made, and three of the prisoners, who were at once brought before the divisional magistrate, were fined 40s. each. With regard to the second paragraph, there was a constable on special duty in front of the Mansion House on the occasion in question. He did his utmost to prevent the students from entering the garden, but was overpowered and roughly handled. The occurrence was entirely unexpected and only lasted for a few minutes. I would refer to the statement made by my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary in answer to a question put to him on the 2nd February in reference to the similar reprehensible proceedings which took place at the Mansion House in December last.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask if evidence was not given to the effect that one policeman was knocked down by those loyal students?

MR. ATKINSON: I am not aware of that.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentlemen's attention was drawn to the report of the local police of that case, when it was stated that one police constable was knocked down and kicked?

MR. ATKINSON: The only information I have upon the matter is that one constable had his uniform torn, and not that he was knocked down.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to a number of students climbing over the Castle wall and tearing down the Union Jack?

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in cases where Nationalist disturbances—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! [After a pause, during which Mr. O'Brien remained standing]: The hon. Member is now repeating the practice to which I

have before called his attention—namely, continuing to stand after I have called him to order.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN : I only want to point a moral.

RIOTS IN BELFAST.

DR. TANNER : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the behaviour of an Orange party in Belfast, who wrecked the houses and places of business of Roman Catholics ; whether he is aware that another Orange party, on last Wednesday night, singing "Soldiers of the Queen," broke the windows of the Christian Brothers' Schools, and the glass door and fanlight in the Roman Catholic Club, severely beat and illtreated two young girls who were coming out of St. Patrick's Church, besides doing much damage in Donegal Street, Divis Street, and York Street ; and whether, seeing that the police were powerless to prevent rioting on Wednesday night, steps will be taken to prevent similar demonstrations against Roman Catholics on occasions of national excitement.

MR. ATKINSON : As far as I can gather from the information before me, it appears that on Wednesday last large crowds of people, accompanied by several bands, marched through the streets of Belfast full of excitement and enthusiasm on account of the relief of Ladysmith. When passing through Donegal Street and York Street a few individuals in the procession, I regret to say, broke the windows in several houses, which, with three exceptions, were the property of Roman Catholics, including the Christian Brothers Schools and the Catholic Club. One girl who was standing in the porch of St. Patrick's Church was struck with a stone, accidentally it would appear. She was taken to the Royal Hospital, where it was found she was slightly injured on the cheek. The police are not aware that a second person was struck, as alleged. Subsequently, and in another part of the city, a Nationalist mob turned out, and by way of retaliation, broke windows in sixteen houses which, with one exception, were the property of Protestants. Owing to the prompt intervention of the police there was no serious rioting or disturbance of the public peace.

The police in Belfast are instructed to do their utmost to preserve the peace and to prevent collisions between the rival parties, and this difficult duty they have hitherto succeeded in performing with zeal and efficiency.

DR. TANNER : This question has been somewhat changed since I put it on the Paper. May I ask whether steps will be taken in case of defeat to secure the Catholics of Belfast from having their windows broken and their premises attacked. We have heard of the retreat of General Buller over and over again, and—

*MR. SPEAKER : Order, order !

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN : May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he can answer my question of last Friday as to the occurrences at Portadown ?

*MR. SPEAKER : That does not arise out of the question on the Paper.

IRISH PRISONS—EXERCISE YARDS.

DR. TANNER : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in how many prisons in Ireland are there open air exercise yards with shelters in case of rain, and how do the ordinary prisons compare with convict prisons in Ireland. Is he aware that, owing to the humidity of climate, prisoners are frequently given their two hours daily exercise in the rain, and often no exercise in consequence of no sheltered yard being provided ; and whether any steps will be taken to remedy this state of things.

MR. ATKINSON : It will take a couple of days to collect the information necessary to enable me to answer this question, and I would ask the hon. Member to repeat it on Thursday next.

MUNICIPAL TRADING COMMITTEE.

MR. KIMBER : I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, pending the appointment of the Municipal Trading Committee recently promised by him, the Government will oppose, or cause to be deferred, any Bills or clauses in Bills promoted by municipal authorities seeking powers to trade or manufacture.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : In answer to my hon. friend I have to say that no

general principle, I think, such as he suggests could be adopted. Each case must be considered on its merits, and undoubtedly the fact that a Committee is sitting, or is proposed to sit, upon the subject is a factor that will be taken into account.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he expects to appoint the Committee on Municipal Trading, which on the 19th February he informed the House he proposed should be appointed without delay.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The reference will be put on the Paper in a day or two.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings of the Committee of Ways and Means, if the Committee be sitting at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order, *Sittings of the House.*"—(*Mr. Balfour.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 274 ; Noes, 30. (Division List No. 51.)

AYES.

Allhusen, Augustus Hy. Eden
Allison, Robert Andrew
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Baker, Sir John
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch')
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. Smith (Hunts)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bethell, Commander
Biddulph, Michael
Bill, Charles
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Alexander H.
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Brymer, William Ernest
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson
Carson, Rt. Hon. Edward
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worce'r)
Channing, Francis Allston
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis

Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. E. H. Athole
Cooke, C. W. R. (Hereford)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Gl'g'w)
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crombie, John William
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Currie, Sir Donald
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardig'n)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Drage, Geoffrey
Duckworth, James
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'n)
Evershed, Sydney
Faber, George Denison
Fardell, Sir T. George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Man'r)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robt. Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H. (City of L.)

Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St George's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Hy. D. (Shrewsbury)
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W.
Hardy, Laurence
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazel, Walter
Heaton, John Henniker
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. H.
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Hohhouse, Henry
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, R. P.
Howard, Joseph
Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hon. Sir U.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Kinloch, Sir John George S.
Kitson, Sir James
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)

Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. William E. H.
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leighton, Stanley
 Leng, Sir John
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swans)
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Liverpool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Maclean, James Mackenzie
 MacLure, Sir John William
 M'Crae, George
 M'Ewan, William
 M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
 M'Killop, James
 Maddison, Fred.
 Malcolm, Ian
 Marks, Henry Hananel
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn W. F.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morrison, Walter
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
 Morton, Ed. J. C. (Devonport)
 Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute)
 Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Myers, William Henry
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 Oldroyd, Mark

Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
 Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs. S. W.)
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
 Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
 Renshaw, Charles Bine
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlep'l)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Robertson, Herb. (Hackney)
 Robson, William Snowden
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
 Runciman, Walter
 Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Samuel, H. S. (Limehouse)
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)

Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Spencer, Ernest
 Stanley, Sir H. M. (Lambeth)
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
 Strachey, Edward
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, W. Edw. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Weir, James Galloway
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 (Taunton)
 Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
 Williams, J. Powell (B'ghm.)
 Wilson, F. W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES:—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Cork, N. E.)
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Blake, Edward
 Carew, James Laurence
 Crilly, Daniel
 Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
 Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Doogan, P. C.
 Engledew, Charles John
 Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis

Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
 Hogan, James Francis
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
 Lloyd-George, David
 Macaleese, Daniel
 MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Q.'s C.)
 McDermott, Patrick
 M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)

O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 O'Malley, William
 Redmond, J. E. (Waterford)
 Redmond, William (Clare)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns

TELLERS FOR THE NOES:—
 Captain Donelan and Mr.
 Patrick O'Brien.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

THE BUDGET STATEMENT.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH,

Bristol, W.): When in October last* I obtained the authority of Parliament for the issue of eight millions of Treasury bills towards the expenses of the war, I reminded the Committee that, although at that time it seemed justifiable to entertain hopes that the campaign might be brought to a successful issue by the 31st of the present month, no one could fore-

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxvii., page 509.

see either the duration or the total cost of such a war as that in which we were engaged. I did not ask at that time for any additional taxation towards the expenditure on the war, for reasons which I think were approved of by the great majority of the country. I stated that, in my judgment, it would be perfectly possible, and it would be right, that the debt proposed to be incurred should be paid off by the end of the financial year after next; and I think that the yield of the revenue since that date has shown that that expectation was absolutely justified. More than that—in my belief, if to that eight millions it had been necessary to add the thirteen millions which has since been voted by Parliament, I feel confident that, without any material increase of taxation, the debt might have been paid off by the date which I named, having regard to that of which I reminded the Committee last October, the capacity of the Transvaal to bear a reasonable share of the expenses of this war.

With regard to that point I entirely adhere to the opinion I then expressed; but I am bound to say that the events which have occurred during the past five months, the claims which must undoubtedly be made for compensation by our loyal colonists in Natal for losses sustained at the hands of the Boers, and the enormous increase in the war expenditure compared with that of which we were then speaking, make me feel that the capacity of the Transvaal to bear the cost of this war is a less important factor—though still an important factor—than I estimated it to be in October last. We must recognise that since that time the whole financial situation has changed. It is not merely that we have had to add £13,000,000 to the £10,000,000 then voted. It is that, in spite of the happy turn which events have recently taken, we feel that there is still so much work before us that it has been our duty to lay on the Table Estimates involving an expenditure of not less than £38,000,000 in the year that is to come on account of the war in South Africa and in defensive preparations at

Sir M. Hicks Beach.

home, which are necessarily a part of the war. Therefore, we have to face a total estimated expenditure of six times as much as that with which we were dealing in October last.

Now, it would have been necessary for me in any case to make an application to Parliament in the course of the present financial year to authorise a loan—for it must have been a loan—of some £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 towards defraying the war expenses to be incurred before the 1st of April, and the heavy payments which fall upon the Exchequer for other matters early in April, up to the date when the Budget is ordinarily introduced. But Her Majesty's Government have had to consider whether a partial proposal of that kind would have been consistent with an adequate performance of their duty to the House and to the country. In the first place, such a course would have been open to some financial objection. The issue of a small loan of that kind, when, from the Estimates presented to Parliament, it was perfectly obvious that a very much larger expenditure was required, a part of which might have to be met by a loan of much greater magnitude, would have been an operation which would have disturbed the money market and have been antagonistic generally to the public interest. Then, those astute persons who are large dealers in dutiable goods, and who have a very intelligent anticipation of future events, have already been taking measures during the existing quarter—measures which I am afraid have been intensified in the last few days—which are distinctly detrimental to the revenue of the country.

But we had to consider not merely the financial aspect of this question. We felt that, having laid these enormous Estimates upon the Table, Parliament had a right to expect from us without delay a full explanation of the financial situation which they involved and a statement of the measures which we, in our belief, thought necessary to meet the exigencies of the public service. We thought, also, that the people on whose judgment and opinion the future course of this war must depend had a right to know what we were doing and to be informed how the grave circumstances with which we had to deal necessitate, in some form or another, an increase of the burdens of the

country. But, perhaps, most important of all, we felt that it was right that by the promptitude with which we met our liabilities we should afford proof to our adversaries and to our foreign critics of our earnestness in the work in which we are engaged—proof, perhaps, even more valuable than success in the field. Therefore, my duty to-night is not merely to make a temporary proposal for tiding over the few weeks that will elapse between now and the ordinary time for the introduction of the Budget, but to lay before the Committee an exposition of the measures by which we propose to provide for the expenditure of the coming year, the Estimates of which have been laid before Parliament.

An early Budget is unusual, but it is not unprecedented; and I am sure the Committee will generally feel that these are times in which an early Budget is absolutely justified. But it is a matter of great inconvenience to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day. It is no easy thing, in these times of great and rapid increases in our expenditure and revenue, for anyone to estimate eleven months beforehand what will be the revenue and expenditure of the coming year. But that difficulty is enormously increased when these Estimates have to be based, not on the facts of the preceding year, but on Estimates themselves. A great part of our expenditure now, unhappily, is on warlike operations in South Africa. We have, to the best of our power, made Estimates of the cost of those operations during the present year, and the House has voted them; but no one can tell us whether the actual expenditure will be accurately represented by those Estimates. It may be more; it may be much less. Again, I have the facts before me of the revenue for nearly eleven months of the year; but I have nothing but estimates of the revenue of the month which still remains. Therefore I need not detain the Committee by arguing how much the ordinary difficulty of estimating the finance of the coming year is added to by an early Budget. For this reason, in the Paper which is now in the hands of hon. Members, I have directed that it should be distinctly stated that the figures are but provisional figures. I do not think it is possible, with regard to details, to draw any comparison between those figures

and the figures of past or future years. But I shall take care that, as soon as possible after March 31st, accurate figures, with regard both to revenue and expenditure for the year 1899-1900, shall be placed before Parliament, by which such a comparison may be made. To-night I shall not trouble the Committee with the ordinary details of the revenue of the year 1899-1900. I will deal more with general figures.

Last April* I estimated the Exchequer revenue of the present year at £111,157,000, that is, at £2,821,000 over the Exchequer revenue of the previous year. In October last I was able to inform the Committee that, in my judgment, that estimate would be largely exceeded; and now I am glad to be able to state that, in my belief the revenue of the present year will amount to at least £116,040,000. I base all these calculations upon figures arrived at before Saturday last. There have been some remarkable circumstances in regard to clearances of dutiable articles on Saturday and to-day by which these figures may be largely disturbed, but the effect of which will, of course, be shown when the full and accurate figures of the year are presented to Parliament.

I estimated, last April, the expenditure of the year at £110,927,000. Since then the House has voted Supplementary Estimates of £745,000; and I had to deduct £1,132,000 of savings. So that the total Exchequer expenditure, but for the war, would have amounted this year to £110,540,000, showing a net surplus of £5,500,000. But, of course, I have to add to that £23,000,000 of Supplementary Army Estimates for the war, and also £270,000 for interest on the Treasury bills of £8,000,000 authorised last autumn. That makes a total Exchequer expenditure for the year of £133,810,000, showing a deficit of £17,770,000, of which £8,000,000 have been temporarily provided for by the issue of Treasury bills. In other words, we have provided towards the war expenditure £5,500,000 from the abounding revenue of the year.

This is the one agreeable feature in my otherwise disagreeable task to-night, and I hope the Committee will pardon

* See Budget Statement, April 13, 1899. (*The Parliamentary Debates*, Fourth Series, Vol. lxix., page 993.)

me for dwelling for a few moments at this oasis in the desert. It bears remarkable testimony to the extraordinary industrial activity and commercial prosperity of the year 1899. It is one of a period—I hope of a long period—of prosperous years; but it has been by far the most prosperous of all. And the improvement in our trade has not been gained by any unwise speculation or undue excitement. I believe that it is due to a steady and substantial progress in business. Nor has it been due to the war. The stringency of the money market during some of the winter months; the withdrawal of many thousands of men from their ordinary occupations for military service; the military demands for coal and iron and others of our great staples, and for transport, which must necessarily have increased the cost of our foreign commerce; even the diminution among the wealthier classes of the ordinary festivities of the year—all these things, directly due to the war, cannot have been for the good of trade during the course of the year, and may, perhaps, have even a greater influence upon the year that is to come. But in spite of that the increase of our foreign trade both in exports and imports has been greater than in any previous year. The increase in the value and the volume of our foreign exports has been quite exceptional, and that not merely in coal or iron or textile manufactures, but in all the main articles of our trade, and it has been diffused over the whole area of our foreign commerce. This increase in foreign trade has not been gained at the expense of our home consumer, as it sometimes is in those countries whose manufacturers are enabled to sell cheaply abroad by artificially enhanced prices deliberately secured to them in their home markets. No; all the statistics show that the prosperity of our trade at home has been at least as great as the prosperity of our foreign trade. Prices have risen in almost everything excepting, I am sorry to add, in the important articles of agricultural produce. But the additional amount that we have had to pay for our imports has been far more than compensated by the gain to the nation in higher prices it has received for its exports. The value of what are known as “gilt-edged securities” has, no doubt, largely fallen. But this has not been due to any

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want of confidence in the country. The simple reason is just this—everybody has found it easy to obtain a far more profitable employment for their capital than by investing it in Government or municipal securities, or railway debentures. Wages have risen considerably; employment has been plentiful; labour disputes have been few and unimportant; and the result of the whole year has been this—that the purchasing power of the working classes has been largely augmented, reacting, of course, on trade, and acting largely on the receipt of the revenue.

The receipts in the Customs and the Inland Revenue from the great articles of beer, of spirits, and of tea have increased largely. No doubt, part of that increase is due to the premature withdrawals from bond to which I have already referred; but quite apart from that they have increased largely. Tobacco and wine have not done quite so well. I am free to admit that tobacco has disappointed my expectations. It may be that this is due to the fact that many thousands of our principal smokers are now in South Africa; but with regard to wine, we have had a considerable increase in the receipts from the wine duties. Of course that was expected, owing to the increase of the wine duties last year, but the increase has not been quite so large as I anticipated. I think, really, that is due to the absence of the ordinary festivities in the winter. But there is nothing in the receipts from tobacco or wine, or from the other heads of Customs and Inland Revenue, which in any way detracts from the evidence which all the returns afford of the general prosperity and comfort of the people.

But a more remarkable increase than that under the head of Customs and Excise is to be found in the receipts from the death duties. The receipts from the death duties by the Exchequer during the present year will, I anticipate, amount to £13,300,000, as against £11,400,000 last year. To that you must add the receipts from death duties by the Local Taxation Fund—£4,171,000—making a total receipt from the death duties of £17,471,000. I think that the wildest dreams of the right hon. Member for West Monmouthshire hardly anticipated that this taxation would produce this amount. But now I wish for a

moment, if I may, to detain the Committee in examining to what this large increase in this year is greatly due. A substantial part of it, I am glad to say, is due to receipts from estates under £250,000 in value. But I have to place before the Committee a case which, I think, affords a singular proof of the manner in which any estimates of the receipts from death duties in any year may be utterly upset by the mere accident of a single death of the owner of enormous property on whose property very high rates of duty would be charged. You can average the estates under £1,000,000 in value; you can take the receipts from over a period of years, and fairly estimate in that way what the probable receipts may be in the year to come; but when you come to estates over £1,000,000 it is absolutely impossible. In 1896-97 there were five estates of millionaires, which paid to the revenue £436,000; in 1897-98 there were nine such estates, which paid £1,212,000; in 1898-99 there were again nine such estates, paying £941,000—an average for the three years of £863,000. I suppose that if I had taken from that average an estimate of £950,000 from the year in which we stand I should not have been blamed for having taken an unfair estimate. But what has been the actual result? We have received during this year from the estates of millionaires close on two millions in Estate Duty, and the vast sum of £900,000 in Death Duties has come from the estate of one man, a foreigner, who, I am told, lived on 15s. a day in a West End London club. That one person, however unwillingly, has contributed to the Exchequer more than the cost of an iron-clad. I am filled with patriotic sentiment at such a contribution to the death duties, but I hope my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Admiralty will not make this a reason for asking for more, because the Committee will see that it is not within the reasonable bounds of expectation that such a windfall as this should occur in subsequent years.

The stamp duties will probably produce £350,000 this year over the Budget estimate. The increase of stamp duties last year in certain points mainly related to dealings on the Stock Exchange. It has not been a very busy year on the Stock Exchange, but I am informed that

the increased duties will produce the amount which I estimated.

It is too early to say with any certainty what the receipts from the income tax will be, because, as hon. Members know, the great bulk of the income tax is collected in this quarter, and we have still a month of the quarter before us. But so far the income tax is doing well. We expect to have an increase of revenue from the Post Office, and other sources of non-tax revenue, of £573,000 over the Budget Estimate. I do not think there is any head of revenue which has not contributed something to the surplus which I have described to the House.

I stated that the total expenditure from the Exchequer in the year was estimated at £133,810,000. I have to add to that £9,599,000 to be paid to the local taxation account—an increase of £78,000 over last year—and the expenditure on capital account of £4,847,000, of which £1,861,000 is derived from the surpluses of previous years, on barracks, telephones, the Uganda Railway, naval and military works, and the acquisition of the territory of the Royal Niger Company. The total expenditure for which the State is responsible this year is estimated at £148,257,000, compared with £121,224,000 last year.

The Exchequer balances on April 1, 1899, were £8,919,000. Of this £1,861,000 belongs to previous surpluses, and had been allotted by Parliament to naval and military works. That has been issued during the year, and the Exchequer balances on March 31 next will, I anticipate, be about £7,130,000 unless it be necessary to draw upon them to any extent for war expenditure, which I think should not be done beyond an amount, say, of £2,000,000.

The total debt of the country on April 1 last year was £635,041,000. Of this £7,479,000 was reproductive debt outside the fixed debt charge, borrowed almost entirely on terminable annuities for thirty years, the principal and interest of which are annually repaid by Votes submitted to this House. That debt now amounts to £10,185,000. The total dead-weight debt on April 1st, 1890, amounted to £627,562,000. Of this £583,186,000 was Funded Debt, £36,243,000 the capital value of terminable annuities, and £8,133,000 floating debt in Treasury bills. Since that time we have cancelled £30,715,000 of

Funded Debt, of which 28 millions were cancelled by exchange for terminable annuities, the remaining £2,715,000 being reduced by the operation of the Life Annuities and new Sinking Fund. On the other hand, we have increased the capital value of the terminable annuities by £24,242,000, the operation being the result of the provisions of the Finance Act of last year, and we have, as the Committee are aware, borrowed £8,000,000 by Treasury bills since last October. The net result is that the total dead-weight debt has increased by £1,527,000. But for the war expenditure having to be provided for by the issue of these £8,000,000 of Treasury bills, the Debt during the year would have been decreased by about £6,500,000. That, I think, is not a very unfavourable record, but, unfortunately, I have to add to it that out of the anticipated deficit of the present year there remains a balance of £9,770,000 still unprovided for, and when we come to the year before us, I am afraid the prospect is even worse.

Now, the Consolidated Fund services of 1900-1 are put at £26,000,000, an addition of £250,000, being the amount on account of interest on the £8,000,000 of Treasury bills already authorised. The Supply services amount to £128,082,000. As compared with last year's Estimates, the Navy has gone up by £928,000, the Civil Service Estimates by £659,000, Post Office and Telegraphs by £415,000, and, of course, the Army by the gigantic sum of £40,883,000. Of this, £37,797,000 is expenditure either directly on the war in South Africa, or connected with and due to the war—such, for example, as the embodiment of the militia in this country, the enrolment of veterans for temporary service, greater facilities and encouragement for the training of Volunteers and Yeomanry, and the provision of mobile guns for the Volunteers. The total estimated expenditure for the year is £154,082,000, an increase of £43,155,000 over the Estimate of last year.

Now I turn to the estimated revenue to meet that expenditure. I take the existing basis of taxation. I estimate the Customs, after allowing something, though, I fear, hardly enough, for premature clearances, at £21,900,000, Excise £31,800,000, death duties £13,000,000, stamps £8,400,000, land tax £800,000,

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house duty £1,650,000, income tax £18,800,000—a total tax revenue of £96,350,000. I estimate receipts from the Post Office at £13,800,000, telegraphs £3,550,000, Crown lands £450,000, Suez Canal shares and sundry loans £850,000, miscellaneous £1,900,000—the total non-tax revenue thus being £20,550,000. This makes a total revenue of £116,900,000, as against the expenditure which I have stated, leaving a deficit for the year of £37,182,000. But, in passing, I should like just to draw the attention of the Committee to this fact, that, out of the Army Estimates, to which, of course, that great deficit is due, £37,797,000 are distinctly War Estimates, and you have to add to that £250,000 for interest on the war debt, making altogether £38,047,000 for war services. That is £865,000 more than the deficit. Therefore, I think the Committee will see that the ordinary revenue of the country would well cover in the coming year the ordinary expenditure, including in that ordinary expenditure nearly £3,000,000 for various increases to the Army, such as the formation of twelve new battalions and forty-three new batteries of artillery.

But, of course, it is clear from these figures that the question before the Committee and the Government really is not how the ordinary expenditure but how the war expenditure is to be provided for. Well, now, what is the amount we should consider in dealing with the war expenditure? We have made the best calculation in our power of what in our judgment it would be right for us to ask from Parliament with a view to the successful prosecution of the war. But it is impossible for us to be certain that the war will be concluded by September 30th next. All I can say is that we do not believe that it is probable that the war expenditure will in any case be less than the Estimate which we have laid on the Table of the House. It may be more, but, as against that, you have to consider the happy change in the military situation which has recently occurred, and the fact that the season is fast approaching which, I believe, all our authorities agree in considering is peculiarly unfavourable for the military operations of the Boers. We may be obliged in July or August next, unhappily, to ask Parliament for further provision,

but I think we are fairly justified in the hope and expectation that the Estimate which we have placed on the Table will be sufficient to conduct this war to a successful termination.

But I am obliged to add something to that statement. I do not know whether hon. Members have carefully studied the memorandum which was circulated by Lord Lansdowne.* If so, they will see that the Estimates do not include all the expenditure for military purposes which he thinks is probable in the year. An important war like this must necessarily be very costly to our reserves in all departments—to guns, to ammunition, to stores; and we are carefully investigating at the present time what provision should be asked from Parliament to place our reserves, both military and naval, in the state in which the country would desire them to be, and I am quite sure that Parliament will not grudge any necessary expenditure for that service. I feel myself justified in saying that, having regard to the probability of the expenditure before us in the coming year, and also to the provision that must be made for the interest upon any loan that Parliament may sanction towards the war expenditure, I think about 5 millions ought to be added to the 38 millions and the 17½ millions to which I have already alluded, making in all a total amount of 60 millions, the provision of which we ought to consider with regard to the war.

That is a very large sum, and the question is how can it be provided? I do not think anybody will suggest that it ought to be provided out of the revenue of the year. There are objections, of course, to a Government loan. A Government loan withdraws capital from the money market which might be better employed in reproductive works. But we are talking of £60,000,000. If it were a question of £10,000,000 or £15,000,000 we might fairly claim, as has been said in past years, that it was a matter to be provided out of the revenue of the year. But to impose taxes so high or so numerous as to provide an additional revenue of £60,000,000 would be to cripple industry and fetter the movement of capital and disturb it in its accustomed employment—a far worse evil to the country than

the issue of a Government loan. Therefore, I need not argue against the idea that such a sum as £60,000,000 should be provided from the revenue of the year.

But I have seen this morning a suggestion that half of it should be so provided, that we should make this an occasion for an entirely new and extraordinary fiscal departure—that we should raise £30,000,000 in addition to our present taxation this year, partly from the income tax, but also from new indirect taxation—a sugar duty, a duty on corn, a duty on meat, a duty on all agricultural produce, and last but, perhaps, most extraordinary of all, in view of what we have done for many years past in cheapening postal communication, by adding £4,000,000 a year to the postal charges for the benefit of the revenue. Well, this is suggested not merely to pay for the war expenditure of the year, but because it is considered that when the war is happily over, in a time of peace, the standing Army of this country is to be increased by 150 per cent., and £20,000,000 a year is to be added to our Army Estimates. I have the greatest respect for the ability of the writer who has propounded these new fiscal doctrines. I have no doubt he would be a much better Chancellor of the Exchequer than I am, but all the same I venture to characterise such proposals as these as in my judgment unwise and impracticable to the last degree.

There is a more seductive and a more dangerous idea afloat of quite another kind. It is said, "Oh, this is war expenditure; you will get it all out of the Transvaal some day. Never mind the future; borrow it all now. Raise taxation if you like to pay the interest on your loans—possibly even a small sinking fund." The Sinking Fund which was established at the time of the Crimean War was abolished the first year after the Crimean War was over. There is nothing more comfortable or more agreeable or more easy for a Chancellor of the Exchequer than to adopt this policy of borrowing; but it is the duty of a Minister, and especially the duty of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, not to mind what is disagreeable or what is unpopular if he believes it to be right. And in my belief, and in the belief of all my colleagues, if we adopted such a course as

* See Appendix to this Volume.

this we should be unworthy of this country and of those who have gone before us. We should be taking the first step on a path of systematic deception of the people, which, if followed, could but end in financial ruin. Let us look back to the history of the past.

There have been two great occasions in the last 100 years in which serious additions have been made—though in very varying degrees—to the National Debt for war expenditure. The first was the great French war, and the second was the Crimean war. I believe that the increase of the Debt during the great French war was no less than £622,000,000. Now, what was the history of that war? In the earlier years of that war, from 1792 to 1798, Mr. Pitt pursued the fatal policy of borrowing each year what he required for war expenditure, and practically providing nothing by taxation except the interest on his loans. What was the result? He borrowed, and he increased the National Debt by £200,000,000. For that increase he got only £108,500,000 in cash. He began to borrow at a rate of interest a little over 4 per cent. By 1797 that rate of interest had increased to 6½ per cent. and more; and I have no doubt it is true, as I think it was once said, that out of our National Debt there is no less than £250,000,000 for which the State has never received a single halfpenny—a mere sacrifice to capital, to induce it to lend, without reducing in any material degree the interest on the loans. Happily for us, happily for the country, in 1798 Mr. Pitt turned over a new leaf. He raised £10,000,000 by the income tax, and continuously from that time to the close of the great war the expenses of the war were met partly by loans no doubt, but also largely by taxation. Three hundred and ninety-one million pounds were raised during that time by our forefathers in taxation towards the expenditure on that war, and that at a time when the country was poor, when the population was small, when they were willing cheerfully to bear 2s. in the £ of income tax for thirteen years of the war, besides indirect taxation of the heaviest kind upon every conceivable article, including the necessities of life, because they were brave enough to save the country from financial ruin.

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Then there were forty years of peace, and the country was again called upon for a special effort at the time of the Crimean War. Mr. Gladstone, at the commencement of that war, endeavoured to raise the whole war charges by increasing taxation. That was soon found to be impossible. In 1855 Sir George Cornewall Lewis budgetted for a war deficit of £23,000,000—much less than what I have to find. He proposed to raise of that £7,000,000 by taxation, and £16,000,000 by loans; and if hon. Members care to study the finance of the Crimean War they will find that out of £67,500,000 which that war cost the country, no less than £35,500,000 was met by additional taxation.

And now, at the end of another fifty years—during which we have seen abatements of taxation in which our forefathers never would have believed, during which we have seen the country as a whole rise to a degree of wealth and prosperity and comfort which they never could have guessed—we are again face to face with a costly war. Sir, I do not compare the present war with the great French War; that was a struggle for life or death prolonged for years. I do not compare it even with the Crimean War. We have to fight a brave, a skilful, and a warlike foe, but the resources of the two Boer Republics are but as nothing compared with the resources of the great empire of Russia. But in proportion, in my humble belief, this war will prove more costly than the Crimean War; and I will tell you why. Because we have had to send to the other side of the world by far the greatest force that has ever left this country; and having sent it, in view of possibilities to which I need not do more than allude, we have felt it incumbent upon us to provide, at great expense, for the defence of the country during the absence of that force. Therefore, I think I may say that although we are perfectly justified by the constant practice and the uniform example of our forefathers in deriving a large part of the funds necessary for the prosecution of the war by the issue of a loan, yet we are also bound to call upon the taxpayers of this country for some immediate and substantial sacrifice, instead of mortgaging the industry of posterity for the whole cost of a

war, some part of which we, surely, in these days of prosperity are well able to bear.

I think there are some things which, in considering this matter of taxation, we ought to bear in mind. In the first place, I have alluded to the probable duration of the war. I think we may reasonably anticipate that, however prolonged the resistance of the Boers may be, this war in its more acute and costly phase will not be a long war. I think that is a reasonable anticipation. Therefore, our necessity being as it is—a temporary necessity for meeting war expenditure—I do not think it is wise, from a financial point of view, to meet a temporary necessity by permanent fiscal changes.

Again, I think we should endeavour as far as possible to meet that temporary necessity by additions to existing taxation instead of by the imposition of new taxation, and certainly that we should endeavour to derive what we need of taxation rather from largely productive taxes than from imposing innumerable small charges here and there, such as many of my correspondents suggest to me, over all kinds of interests and classes in the country, which would raise really a very small total all put together, but which would create extraordinary vexation and worry in the operations and calculations of very many people.

Well, but, Sir, there is another thing. During the last four years the proportions in which our revenue has been derived from direct and indirect taxation have not materially varied. The portion of it derived from direct taxation is rather less—a slightly increasing proportion—than that derived from indirect taxation, but there has been no material variation. I think those proportions are fair. I do not agree with those persons who would desire to upset them largely from either side, and I think that as the result of any fresh taxation we now propose, we should endeavour, as far as may be, that those proportions should not be materially varied. Now, having said this, I will proceed to what I feel the Committee is anxious to hear—namely, what are the precise taxes I am going to suggest.

In the first place, I turn to the income tax. The income tax has always been considered a tax that might properly be augmented on the occasion of a war, and

that for the obvious reason that it can be dealt with either by way of raising it when required for a war, or by way of lowering it when the war is over without any practical disturbance, either of trade or commerce. The income tax was the main source from which the Ministers who were responsible for taxation at the time of the Crimean War drew the increased revenue they required; and since that time there has been occasion more than once on which, for our smaller wars or preparations for war, practically the whole of the increased taxation imposed has been drawn through the income tax. But I am bound to say that circumstances since that time have changed. The income tax was the main source in the time of the Crimean War of direct taxation. The great increase of the death duties in our time has made a considerable difference, to my mind, in that respect, and it must fairly be considered in dealing with this subject. On the other hand, since the Crimean War, the incidence of the income tax on certain classes who felt it heavily has been materially lightened. For example, in 1894 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire gave what I admitted then and always have admitted since to be a great boon to the owners of property, whether in houses or land assessed under Schedule A, by allowing them a considerable deduction from their assessments in calculating their income tax, which has made a material difference in the poundage of income tax on that class of income-tax payers. Then, again, at the time of the Crimean war all persons with incomes above £100 a year paid income tax. Since then it has been provided that nobody with an income not exceeding £160 shall pay income tax at all, while the lower classes, so to speak, of income tax payers have been materially relieved by the abatements in the income tax on incomes between £160 and £700 a year; which, again, deduct from their income tax some very material poundage, especially in the lower grades. And, therefore, while we have to consider, on the one hand, that the pressure of direct taxation as a whole is greater than it was in former years, so we have to consider, on the other hand, that the incidence of the income tax itself is lighter on those classes who are most heavily burdened. Well, at the time of the French war, as I have reminded the

Committee, there was an income tax of 2s. in the £ for thirteen years. I do not propose to impose that now. At the beginning of the Crimean war—before the war began—the income tax was 7d. in the £. It was at once raised to 1s. 2d. in the £, and in the second year of the war it was raised to 1s. 4d. in the £. I do not propose to impose either of those rates now, but I do ask the income-tax payers to make some sacrifice; and, having regard to the past, I do not think they can fairly complain of paying a very substantial contribution towards the cost of this war—namely, an increase of the tax by 4d. in the £ to 1s. in the £ for the coming year. That will produce in the year before us £6,500,000. In the year following there will be arrears to come in of £1,900,000.

Next, Sir, I have a small addition, or rather what I may call a rectification of the law, with regard to direct taxation in the matter of stamp duties which I propose to make. At present, as the Committee are aware, there is a stamp duty of 1s. on what are called contract notes which are delivered by brokers to their clients in transactions on the Stock Exchange. Well, Sir, precisely similar transactions, in precisely the same form, are carried out by brokers in many produce exchanges throughout the country, and in other ways. I propose that the 1s. duty shall also be imposed upon those contracts, and I am told that these transactions are so numerous that the result is likely to be an increase to the revenue by £150,000 a year.

I now turn to what will be more interesting to the Committee—indirect taxation. I said last October that I thought it would be grossly unfair to impose additional taxation upon the income-tax payers alone for the purposes of this war. I still entertain that opinion, and I think we are bound to make considerable increases also in indirect taxation. My principle is this—that so far as may be all should pay something towards the cost of this war, but the richest should pay the most.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Tax diamonds.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Now, last year we raised the wine duties with, I *Sir M. Hicks Beach.*

think, satisfactory results. I naturally turn this year to beer. There has been a great increase during the past few years in the production and consumption of beer. In 1895-96 the duty on beer yielded £10,719,000. This year it is expected to yield more than £11,900,000. I propose to impose an additional 1s. a gallon on beer. I beg pardon for exciting the apprehensions of my hon. friends; of course, I mean 1s. a barrel of thirty-six gallons. I estimate that that will produce £1,752,000 in the course of the twelve months.

Having increased the duty on beer, I next come to spirits. Now spirits have been somewhat favoured of late years as compared with beer. In 1894, I think, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire imposed an additional 6d. a gallon on spirits and 6d. a barrel on beer. In the following year he took off the 6d. a gallon on spirits, but he retained the 6d. a barrel on beer, and that has remained on beer since. Therefore, so far I think I am right in saying that of late years spirits have been rather favoured. What is the position of spirits? The position of spirits at the time the right hon. Gentleman proposed his duty was a very bad one. The trade was bad, and by his having unfortunately selected too early a date for the cessation of the duty the dealers in spirits, with their natural cunning, were able to delay their clearances, and thus to deprive him of, I think, a very large part of the yield which he expected from the duty. Now, Sir, circumstances, I hope, are different. The production and consumption of spirits has enormously increased of late years. I find that the excise duty on spirits produced in 1895 was £15,603,000, while this year it is expected to produce £18,500,000. I think that, having regard to that fact, we may very properly impose another 6d. a gallon on spirits. I wish to say that, with regard to this as well as the rest of the indirect taxation which I am about to propose, I look upon it as a temporary addition to the existing taxation—I hope merely for the coming year; but I propose in all cases to enact now that the additional taxation shall last until the 1st of August, 1901—not, I hope, that it will be necessary to levy it so long, but that it may be dealt with at the ordinary time in the Budget of the year, and that the date of

its expiry may be fixed far enough beyond the Budget to prevent dealers in these dutiable articles from doing what they did in 1894, and keeping back their clearances until the Budget was introduced. I hope that will be clearly understood with regard to the date for which I propose this taxation. My estimates of the yield of it are solely for the twelve months. I estimate that 6d. a gallon additional on spirits will produce £1,015,000.

Now, Sir, we have dealt with the income-tax payer and the consumers of alcohol. I think it will be felt generally that tobacco ought to bear some further burden. I confess it is with great regret that I find myself driven again, after so short an interval, to alter the duty on tobacco. I know the inconvenience to the trade, and I regret it, but I think it would not be fair that tobacco should be exempted from taxation. Now, Sir, what we did in 1898 was this: we reduced the tobacco duty by 6d. in the pound. We also reduced the legal limit of moisture from 35 to 30 per cent. I anticipated a very considerable increase in the consumption from that reduction. My anticipations, I have to admit, have not been realised. It may possibly be that a comparatively small reduction in the price of tobacco does not materially increase the consumption. It may be that the trade statistics, which certainly convinced me that the reduction had reached the consumer, were less accurate than I had supposed. I wish to be perfectly frank, and I have endeavoured to be so. But we have to consider whether we should merely put back the duty and the moisture to the same amount as two years ago, or whether we should do something else. Now, Sir, I confess I am reluctant to again increase the legal limit of moisture. The result of the reduction of the legal limit was this, that the smoker of the cheapest tobacco, which is most watered, got three-pence worth more of tobacco in every pound. He bought more tobacco for his money than he did before in place of a similar weight of water. Well, if I restore the old limit of moisture the result would be that the smoker of the cheapest quality of tobacco would lose that tobacco and get water instead, and as water does not pay the tax the revenue would lose also. No doubt the dealer would gain, but I do not see why the dealer should gain at the cost

of the consumer and the revenue. What I think would be fair, after having gone somewhat fully into this matter, would be to retain the present limit of moisture and to increase the duty by 4d. in the pound. I would also propose to increase the duty on foreign cigars by 6d. in the pound. I anticipate that will yield altogether an addition of £1,100,000 to the revenue.

We have now got the smokers on our list. But there is a very large population who do not pay income tax, who do not consume alcohol, and who do not smoke, and I think they ought to pay something towards the expense of this war. I look for an article which in our days is comparatively cheap, which is not the subject of any manufacture in this country, or ought not to be, and which is very largely consumed—I look to tea. At the time of the Crimean War the duty on tea was 1s. 6d. in the pound. It was promptly raised by threepence in the pound with practically, I think, no objection from anybody whatever. The duty on tea in 1889 was 6d. in the pound. My right hon. friend the present First Lord of the Admiralty reduced it by 2d. At that time the average wholesale price of the pound of tea was 10·79d., making altogether, with the 6d. duty, 16·79d. per pound. Now I am informed that the average wholesale price of tea is 8·87d. per pound. If I were to add 2d. to the duty, that would make altogether, with the duty, 14·87d. per pound—2d. per pound less than the price in 1889. I propose to add 2d. per pound to the duty on tea, and that will produce £1,800,000 in the course of twelve months, and I do not think that the population at large will have any very fair ground of complaint at the amount they will be called on to bear towards the cost of what the vast majority of them believe to be a necessary war. The total result of the additional taxation I propose will be an increase in the revenue of £12,317,000, besides the £1,900,000 arrears of income tax which will fall into the future year.

Then I propose to reduce the expenditure. In the year 1885 the country was called upon to find, I think, £11,000,000 towards preparations for war. On that occasion, with the unanimous consent of Parliament, it was agreed to stop the re-

payment of capital wrapped up in the terminable annuities belonging to the various Government Departments, and included, of course, in the fixed debt charge for the year. I propose to do the same thing now. That will reduce the expenditure of the year by £4,640,000. I think it would be perfectly absurd that, while we have with one hand largely increased our debt we should be paying off old debt with the other.

Now, Sir, I come to the final balance-sheet. I stated that the public expenditure of the coming year would be £154,082,000. I deduct from that £4,640,000 owing to the procedure I have just stated, leaving the total expenditure £149,442,000. Against that I anticipate a revenue from Customs, £25,017,000; Excise, £34,350,000; death duties, £13,000,000; stamps, £8,550,000; land tax, £800,000; house duty, £1,650,000; income tax, £25,300,000; making a total tax revenue of £108,667,000, and a non-tax revenue of £20,550,000, or a total revenue of £129,217,000, as against an expenditure of £149,442,000, thus leaving a deficit for the year of £20,225,000.

Add to that the expected deficit on this year of £17,770,000, and £5,000,000 which I have stated must be added for the contingencies I have named, and you will find a total of, say, £43,000,000, which I must ask permission to borrow. Part of that will be provided to the extent of £8,000,000 by renewing the Treasury Bills which were issued under the authority of the House given in October last. Therefore there is £35,000,000 of new debt to be incurred.

Now I do not think I need argue that such a sum as this is too large to be added to our floating debt. It would be practically impossible, I think, to deal with it in that way. On the other hand, I confess that in my opinion it would be a mistake to raise it by a new issue of Consols. Of course there are arguments in favour of such a course. Consols are a very large stock. They are very well known, and therefore command a better price in the market, comparatively, than other Government securities. Therefore an issue of Consols might possibly be done at a cheaper rate at the moment than another form of issue. But an issue of Consols would be an issue of permanent debt which this country would be unable to

pay off until 1923. Well now, what have we seen lately? A few years ago I was redeeming Consols at the price of 14 per cent. premium. A few years hence, when peace is concluded, the length of the term for which Consols cannot be paid off at par, will, I anticipate, have a great effect in producing a rise in their present value. If I borrow Consols now I should have to borrow, at a rate governed by the present market price of, I think, less than 101, the same debt which a few years ago I paid off at a 14 per cent. premium, and which we may hope in a few years may again be paid off and would have to be paid off at a premium though possibly not so high.

For these reasons I do not think it would be advisable that we should look to an issue of Consols. I think it would be better that part of this £35,000,000 should be reserved—I think probably a sum not exceeding £5,000,000—for a further issue of Treasury bills if required. The rest I should propose to raise by bonds or stock issued for a term of years not exceeding ten. I have reason to believe that it would be possible to place such an issue on very reasonable terms, and I should hope to be able to do it in a way which would not ensure profit merely to a few great and wealthy persons but would bring the whole public into what I may call a war loan and enable them to come forward to the assistance of the country. I would ask the Committee to pass a resolution enabling me to borrow in the manner I have described to the extent of £35,000,000 without fettering me as to the precise terms and conditions of the issue. At the time of the Crimean war, and before it, the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day used to come down to Parliament on such an occasion and tell them he had contracted with certain parties for an issue of Consols, or whatever the stock might be, at a certain price, and all that Parliament had to do was to confirm the contract when made. I have not deemed such a course desirable now. I ask Parliament to give me authority to borrow, but in my belief it would be contrary to the public interest to specify beforehand the precise terms and conditions of the loan. I will do my best for the State, and then I will come to Parliament and insert in the Bill whatever

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terms and conditions may have been decided upon.

I do not propose at present to make any special provision for paying off this loan. It ought, in my judgment, to be done at the close of the war, but it would be premature to do so before we know our total liabilities, and how much can be properly exacted from the Transvaal. But I may point out that between now and 1910 we have ample means in prospect to meet whatever may fall upon ourselves. Between 1902 and 1904 the fixed debt charge will be relieved of the converted annuities to the amount of £684,000 a year, and of the great Chancery annuities to the amount of £2,943,000 a year, and, further, in 1903, of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on Consols to the extent of £1,300,000 a year. I think the Committee will see, without my saying anything further on this point, that ample means are before us to be utilised to any extent that may be right and necessary in the matter of the repayment of the loan now to be borrowed.

I have now finished my task, and I have to thank the Committee for the patience with which they have heard me. We have thought it right on this occasion to endeavour, though it is a time of war, to adhere to the old practice of one financial statement in the year. It is better, and it is fairer to Parliament. We have asked for no more than we believe will be required. We may have to ask for more, but even if in July or August next we should have to ask for more it will be better to have made this large request at once than to annoy the House of Commons with repeated requests, whether for additional taxation or whether for additional loans, none of them adequate to the real emergency of the situation. My proposals may or may not commend themselves to the Committee, but I hope the Committee will feel that, at any rate, I have placed before them, to the best of my power, a plain and honest statement—endeavouring to conceal nothing and to extenuate nothing, however disagreeable the facts or the proposals may be.

But I hope the Committee will agree to my proposals, for I think they are justified by the circumstances of the time, and they are based upon the

best financial traditions of the country. This is not a time, disagreeable as increased taxation may be, at which we should shrink from showing our confidence in the resources of our country, or in the self-denial of our people. Foreign nations are watching us, sometimes, I fear, with no friendly eye, to see whether years of comfort, of peace, of increasing wealth, have softened the fibre or diminished the courage and the tenacity of purpose of our race. Our soldiers in the field, from whatever part of the Empire they have come, have shown that they are equal to their forefathers. Our great colonies, though perhaps at first sight not so directly interested in this war as ourselves, have eagerly taxed themselves in men and money for the cause of the Empire. Shall we, who sit at home at ease, show ourselves at such a moment financial cowards? Shall we confess to the world that the cost of a few months of war frightens us out of a financial policy which we know to be sound? No, Sir, I do not believe it. We have placed before this House, during days and weeks, our views as to the policy and conduct of this war. We have defended ourselves, I hope not unsuccessfully, against the imputations and charges that have been made. Opinions on these subjects may differ, but there is one thing on which the great majority of this nation has made up its mind, and that is that, at whatever cost, this war shall be prosecuted to a successful termination. To-day we ask you to provide means to fulfil that mandate of the people. We leave the request in your hands with confidence, feeling sure that the House of Commons will grudge no effort and shrink from no sacrifice which the honour of our country and our duty to the Empire demand. I beg now to move the first Resolution, namely, that with regard to the duty on tea.

TEA.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in lieu of the duty of customs now payable on tea, there shall be charged, levied, and paid on and after the 6th day of March, 1900, and until the 1st day of August, 1901, the following duty (that is to say):—Tea, the pound, 6d."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): It is the established Parliamentary practice, sanctioned by the highest financial authority whose weight is acknowledged in all parts of the House, that on this occasion the Committee should not engage in any full and exhaustive criticism or examination of the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is absolutely necessary that the Committee should pass certain resolutions for the purpose of saving the revenue and preventing the forestalment and evasion of the law. In the passing of those resolutions we shall, of course, be disposed to give every facility to Her Majesty's Government, but this is done on the distinct understanding that, by so doing, the House of Commons is not in the least degree committed to any part of the policy espoused by the right hon. Gentleman, and that we shall have a better opportunity on future occasions, when the Bill is before us, for expressing our opinions. I remember that, in October, when the right hon. Gentleman stated the manner in which he was going to deal with the expenditure which had been incurred for the war, I said of him that he had made a speech embodying a great deal of sound doctrine. I think the same thing may be said to-night. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has, in many parts of his speech, given expression, with a fervour and sincerity which showed how deeply he was convinced of their truth, to doctrines which, I am sure, no one on this side of the House or on that, who has studied the great principles which govern our finance, will find fault with for a moment. The right hon. Gentleman will, of course, understand that we cannot but look upon him with a certain degree of doubt owing to certain incidents in his financial history. There are some episodes in the last three or four years of which we have not yet been able to bring ourselves to approve. There was last year the occasion when the Government, with a lack of courage which I think did them very little credit, broke in on the established custom of relieving the burden of debt for very inadequate reasons, and, at the same time, broke in also upon that reserve of strength which was provided precisely, so far as it went, for emergencies such as this. Then we also recall the strange dealings of the right hon. Gentleman with the tobacco duty, which he has acknowledged to-night not to have been altogether successful. Of that I would merely say that it never appeared to have realised any advantage to the consumer, or at all events, if I may use the word in this other sense, the consumer has never been able to realise it in the sense of discovering and appreciating that advantage. Then—I will not renew the old controversy—the right hon. Gentleman, having been provided by the fiscal reforms of my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouthshire with a bulwark of financial strength such as no Finance Minister has ever had the advantage of before, proceeded to fritter away a large part of that strength by a series of doles to particular classes of the community who certainly were not amongst the most necessitous classes, and has given the money not even to the most necessitous within those classes, and in that way, so far as the money goes, amounting to, I think, about £4,000,000 a year, he has weakened his position for an occasion such as this. But this is not the time to go into these matters. We are very glad indeed to recognise that the right hon. Gentleman has to-night dealt not only in a straightforward but in a statesmanlike and discreet way with the difficulty before him, and with a courage that from his natural temperament we were willing to ascribe to and expect from him. The first great question in a case such as this is what part of this great burden shall be dealt with by way of taxation and what part by way of future obligation in the shape of debt. The right hon. Gentleman has described the different nature of the advice which he has received. He has resisted extreme advice in both directions, and it is my impression that he has made an apportionment which is fair and equitable as between those two methods of dealing with the matter. The right hon. Gentleman has very properly put a considerable part of the expenditure—not very far from the same proportion as was proposed in the case of the Crimean War—upon the shoulders of the taxpayers. I, for one, could never believe for a moment—I would never do my countrymen the discredit and dishonour to believe—that they would shirk an obligation of this kind. We have all been proud of the patriotic spirit exhibited within the last few weeks. If that patriotism is anything but the merest smoke and bluster, surely the British people are willing to bear a burden of

this kind to support those whom they have so readily sent to sacrifice their comfort, their safety, and sometimes their lives on the battlefield. There may be, of course, to individuals inconvenience and hardship, and even deprivation, but I do not think that anyone in this House has any fear that the taxpayer will not be ready cheerfully to do his duty. As to the details of the proposals, it will, as I have said, be wiser and more convenient to the House that our opinion should be reserved. I, however, may say, in my particular capacity as a Scotch Member, I think that something will be said as to the increase of the spirit duty from a national point of view on the part of both the Irish and the Scotch. There is a strong belief in Scotland and Ireland, apart from all the financial arguments which may be used by experts in the public offices and in this House, that the taxation put upon the general drink of the masses is heavier by a great deal than that which is laid on the general drink of the English community, and I think they would have been glad if they had been spared somewhat in this respect. I merely forecast that as a line of argument likely to be used in the course of the debates. It is quite understood that the House will at future stages give its decision on each of these proposals. What we must satisfy ourselves of is that the proposals are the least burdensome, the least inconvenient, and the most fair and most advantageous to the Exchequer which can be devised. In giving our assistance to the right hon. Gentleman, and in endeavouring to help him in coming to a conclusion, we shall, at all events, be guided by this feeling—that in hardly any quarter of the House is there any disposition, as the Votes in Supply have already shown, to display any grudging spirit in prosecuting the financial proposals of the Government.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I do not think this occasion should be allowed to pass without some expression of opinion from this quarter of the House. We have now reached a period when the Government of the so-called United Kingdom are obliged to bring in a Budget of over £150,000,000. In other words, we have to find in one year an amount equal to one fourth of the National Debt. At the time the disastrous Union was accomplished the total National Debt of Ireland

was under £8,000,000, and now we are asked in one single year to bear a proportion of expenditure amounting to over £150,000,000, in addition to the charge of the ordinary standing National Debt. I wonder what the statesmen who made such promises to Ireland at the time of the Union would have thought if they had been told that 100 years hence this appalling and crushing burden would be placed upon us. I should like to say a word in reference to the unhappy position in which Ireland is situated. The right hon. Gentlemen gave a very glowing account of how England and Scotland are advancing by leaps and bounds; he spoke of there being higher wages, greater prosperity, and larger incomes than ever before. The only industry which had not gained in prosperity was that of agriculture. In other words, the country which alone has not progressed is bound to bear with you *pari passu* this extravagant expenditure. At the time of the Union we had a number of industries; they have since disappeared. Our country was richer to an enormous degree, both in flocks and herds, as well as in population and purse, than she is now; and yet, whereas your taxable capacity has increased a hundredfold while ours has decreased in a similar degree, we have to bear with you a burden equal to your own. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded calmly to treat the two cases—on the one side a living body and on the other a corpse; he proceeded to administer to them the same physic, and to prescribe the same treatment. One would have thought that, as Minister for this Empire, he would have taken note of the difference between the two countries, and have made some difference in the treatment. Throughout his speech there is not a trace of the necessity for dissimilarity of treatment; there is not a trace of any intention on his part to fulfil the pledges given by the statesmen of the Union to grant Ireland exceptional exemptions and abatements suited to her case and position. Does the right hon. Gentleman think himself an Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, or does he regard himself as a British Chancellor of the Exchequer? So far as the shepherding of the separate interests of Ireland is concerned, I can see no indication. We are told we have the honour and glory of forming a portion of this Empire. I would like to ask how much of this war

expenditure has been spent in Ireland. I will take him upon that issue alone. You have spent upon your exceptional war operations something like £50,000,000, in round figures. Of that amount you have spent about fivepence in Ireland. England has benefited by the engagement of ships, the casting of cannon, the making of munitions of war, saddlery, and the thousand and one necessary articles for such an undertaking, but only a few horses have been bought in Ireland, and even those would not have been purchased there if you could have got them cheaper or better elsewhere. Perhaps I am wrong in saying that everything else has been bought in England and Scotland. Of course Germany has not been forgotten; Brazil has not been forgotten; you have bought mules in Brazil. America has not been forgotten; you have bought saddlery there. Austria has not been forgotten; you have obtained underclothing in some of the central European States. What do we gain by the war? Nothing, except that a few Orangemen have desecrated Catholic churches in Belfast and broken the heads of Catholic workmen in Portadown. What do we lose by it? When the legless and armless men of the Dublin Fusiliers return, we shall have to put them up in our workhouses and bear the expense on the local taxation. In Drumcondra alone, a little suburb of Dublin, there are forty widows. In one miserable little street in Dublin, Cook Street, there are eight widows as the result of this war. The wearing of black by the people of the poorer classes is distinctly noticeable in the streets of Dublin. I do not say that you have not done your duty in this respect. I believe you have. It is but fair to admit the magnificent manner in which the aristocracy as well as the working classes have gone to the assistance of their country. But, at all events, you will have the gold mines at the finish; you will have the Transvaal at the end. You will have an asset; what shall we have, except graves and dead? That is our position, to which the right hon. Gentleman in bringing in his £150,000,000 Budget, does not even think it worth his while to make any reference. These facts have not even excited a passing remark upon them. Let me refer to the question of tobacco. If anyone reads the history of Ireland, they will find it stated that between Dublin and the

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county of Cork, for a distance of 150 miles, heaps of tobacco were being burned in the fields, and tobacco growing was once an important branch of the Irish agricultural industry. Ireland can grow tobacco, and she has grown it successfully in the past; and you have now throughout Ireland a revenue and police system which would give you full warning of smuggling, and by which it would be easy to prevent illicit growth and manufacture of tobacco. While the right hon. Gentleman proposes to enhance the tobacco duty, he does not even suggest the relaxation of the restrictions which would enable the tobacco industry to thrive in Ireland. What he has said is from an English point of view, and I do not suppose any Englishman can fairly complain of the Budget. But the position of Ireland is entirely different. It is said that the burden has been put upon all classes; that incomes have been taxed, as well as the tobacco user and the beer consumer. Even the teetotaler, it is claimed, has not been left out, and accordingly the right hon. Gentleman taxes tea. In other words, the right hon. Gentleman taxes the three great articles consumed by the poor, because a man may drink tea who is also a tobacco smoker and a beer or whisky drinker. The right hon. Gentleman has dived into the pockets of the poor in Ireland. It is not enough for Ireland to have to provide brave soldiers, but the poor have to provide their wages as well out of their poverty. I would make a claim that now, at all events, if he is going to increase the tax upon tobacco, he should take this opportunity of relieving the Irish people from the restrictions on growing tobacco. It is the merest matter of arrangement. In the old days when the tobacco industry flourished there was no such thing as the revenue and police system as it exists at the present moment. The Royal Irish Constabulary had not then been established. Smuggling was rife, and it was impossible to collect the duty. You have in every village in Ireland ten policemen, costing the country, with a sergeant, £1,000 a year; you have a schoolmaster and schoolmistress, costing £150 a year; and you also make us pay a large contribution every year for education—and what do we get out of this glorious system? You say you cannot reduce the number of police, but why not turn them to some good account, and make them do some-

thing for their wages? At present they are simply engaged in the collection of rents for landlords, and they take part in an occasional eviction, and in the North of Ireland the police are utilised to prevent Orangemen from shooting down the Catholics. Therefore you have in every village the means of providing that if tobacco is grown the tax upon it shall be fairly paid and assessed. When there was a Vice-Chancellor of Ireland we had somebody to look after Irish industries, but no one seems to care for the interests of Ireland now. Much as I respect the right hon. Gentleman, he has a British skin, and he cannot, therefore, have an Irish heart, but he knows a great deal more about our country than he pretends to do. How is it that he never casts upon that country a pitying glance? If we have to pay this extra tobacco duty the restrictions upon the growth of that article ought to be removed in Ireland. According to the English view, when you put a tax on whisky its fiscal nature disappears, and it assumes a position of benevolence. You tax Irish peasants not to carry on wars, but to prevent them getting drunk; you say it is for our own benefit, for fear we should relapse into the position of the savage. When Mr. Gladstone put the increased tax on whisky the result was that he wiped out seventy distilleries in Ireland. You say it does not matter what taxes you impose on whisky, but there is not one of you will examine the state of things in Ireland and look at it from an Irish point of view. You are all chock full of the war in South Africa, or of your policy in China or Madagascar, and there is hardly a subject which you are not full of. The only thing you care about in Ireland is how much revenue you can get out of her, and Ireland is looked upon solely as a taxable commodity. Your conduct towards Ireland is heartless and callous. This tax upon whisky is undoubtedly an additional burden. There was great laughter when the right hon. Gentleman mentioned gallons instead of barrels in the case of the beer tax, and I suppose if he put one shilling a gallon on beer there would be a revolution in Whitechapel. But when the right hon. Gentleman comes to deal with whisky it is not in barrels he measures at all. He puts only one shilling on thirty-six gallons of beer, but there is to be sixpence put upon each gallon of whisky. I say this war has been got up by Mr. Cecil Rhodes,

and the extra taxes should have been put on diamonds. I do not see why stock-brokers should not pay an enormous tax as well as barristers and solicitors. Why not make those pay more who make enormous fortunes on the Stock Exchange? You do not propose that because they are all Tories; and they find that nothing is more delightful than to read in the newspapers, when the news of great victories is to hand, that they have been singing "God save the Queen" on the Stock Exchange. I do not think they would be in such a splendid state of jollification if they had to pay a tax of £500 a year. Irishmen have got both to fight your battles and to pay for them out of their miserable incomes. There is before the House the Tithe Rent-charge Bill for Ireland, by which the landlords are to be relieved to the extent of £50,000 a year in order to enable them to pay their war taxes. For my part I do not at all see the objection to the raising of this large sum by way of a loan. Why should the people of the present time bear all the burden? The people who gain by this war should be the people to pay for it. No doubt the English people would cheerfully provide the taxes for the right hon. Gentleman purely out of public spirit and patriotism. The right hon. Gentleman went on to remark that the colonies were providing enormous sums towards this war, and I should like to know how much they were providing. I read the other day the telegram sent by the Colonial Secretary to Australia asking for more men, and he told them that the Imperial Treasury would pay the bill. Those men have to be paid by the unfortunate people of Ireland, and it is untrue to say that the colonies are paying for this war. They are paying these men 5s. per day. If I had not anything to do myself I should have regarded at one time such an offer and a trip to a foreign country as very satisfactory. It is unfair to suggest that Australia is bearing any of these burdens. And why should not our colonies pay? They are very keen on the war. And why should Canada not contribute, for she gets a great deal of *kudos* out of it? When the Canadians in battle are praised they are put in the newspapers in big letters, but when the Irish troops score at the front this is not done. [Ministerial cries of "Oh, oh!"] Why not make the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands contribute to this splendid

Imperial saturnalia of generosity? The only country which is made to pay is the very one which is protected by treaty from paying. With regard to the income tax, as far as England is concerned, it is a fair item, but is it fair in regard to Ireland? It was understood at the time of the Union that the income tax would not be charged. It was never dreamt of, and we did not pay income tax for fifty years after the Union was established. It was put on as a temporary expedient after the time of the Crimean War, and now, in spite of our protest on this financial question and the finding of the Royal Commission that we are paying £3,000,000 a year too much, you propose to increase our income tax by 4d. in the £. I think that imposition might, at least, be left alone as regards Ireland, whose income is very limited, for there are no large businesses in Ireland. Is it fair to tax limited incomes with no chance of extension in the same way as those enormous incomes in this country? I emphatically protest against this system of taxing Ireland for military purposes, while you keep her hampered and deny her her liberties. We do not desire to go abroad to kill Dutchmen, but we desire to leave them alone in the enjoyment of the country which they have acquired. Having denied us Home Rule, that ought to make you keener and more zealous not to pile upon us those burdens which the denial of Home Rule involves. I beg of you, as fair-minded men, to cast aside political prejudice and to look at the impoverished condition of the Irish people. If you will do so you will see that you ought to arrange your fiscal system so as not to place any additional burden upon the people of Ireland.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I only rise to-night to add my tribute of admiration for the speech the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has addressed to the Committee—a speech, if I may be permitted to say so, distinguished by soundness of financial principles and still more valuable on account of the political courage with which those principles were expressed. It is not the first time I have congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on his financial ability, and I have had also to congratulate him on his financial good fortune in times of peace. He has had the advantage of extremely prosperous times; he has spoken of the

great prosperity of the country, and we all join in rejoicing and hope it may be as lasting as it is great. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his courage, but I think he is rather in the position in which Solon found himself when he said—

“I did not always give the best laws, but the best laws the people would bear.”

When the right hon. Gentleman referred to history and the courage of our ancestors in respect to taxation, I thought the boldness he had shown was hardly equal to the example. I will not go further back than the Crimean War, but in relation to that war when the question arose of distribution of cost between borrowing and taxation—I have a note here I took from Sir Stafford Northcote's book on financial policy—at the time the accounts were made up, the cost of the war was calculated at £76,400,000. Well, that was a two years war, and we have run up nearly that bill in less than six months, and how much more it will prove of course no man can tell. But, in dealing with that war a generation, I may say two generations ago, out of the £76,000,000, £40,000,000 was raised by additional taxation, or more than half, and £32,000,000 was added to the Debt of the country. These amounts do not make up the total, but at the conclusion of peace the balance was made up by increases in the productiveness of taxes, so that at the end of the war when accounts were made up £40,000,000 had been raised by additional taxation and £32,000,000 only was added to the Debt. I adhere so completely to the principles which the right hon. Gentleman has stated that I do not wish to be captious in my criticisms, but there is one very interesting question upon which I should be extremely glad to have some further information from the right hon. Gentleman. I observed a passage in his speech which was received with considerable approbation, not only from this side of the House, but from the opposite side also; and it was that the Transvaal ultimately was to pay for the cost of the war. I should very much like to know how he expects to get the money? We know that we are waging this war partly in order that Johannesburg should be a self-governing and self-taxing community. I presume after this war has been brought to a successful issue Johannesburg in

Mr. T. M. Healy.

some form or other will tax itself. But then we have the prospect that these millionaires—Mr. Beit, Mr. Rhodes, and others—will have the taxation of the Transvaal at their own disposal. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER dissented.] Ah! that is exactly what I want to hear. That is the point on which I should like some fuller explanation from the right hon. Gentleman. They will say, "We are fighting for liberty, for self-government; you are never going to oppress the people of Johannesburg by centralised taxation dictated from England? We are a free and independent community, who are to tax ourselves." We know the political and economical creed and the principles of patriotism which are professed by the ruling spirits and the governing classes of the future Johannesburg. To them the British flag is not emancipation, it is not freedom; no, it is a "commercial asset." But I should like to know the principles of finance of the persons who regard the British flag as a commercial asset, and it would interest the country very much to be informed how we are going to get at the money in the reformed Transvaal. We had one of these financial statements the other day, I think from Mr. Robinson; and he calculated that the result of the war would be to increase the value of the ore from 6s. or 8s. to 10s. a ton, and that the war would work out to an advantage of between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000. These are the golden prospects he held out to his shareholders. That sum would be extremely useful to the taxpayers of this country. I do not ask the right hon. Gentleman to reveal his secrets to-night; but when we are taxing the people of this country, and adding many millions to the National Debt with the vague and misty expectation that those gentlemen who are going to put millions into their pockets as the result of the war, will contribute their proper proportion to that expenditure that is a point on which, I think, the taxpayers of the country would like to be informed. I confess that I do not expect much from the munificence or generosity of these gentlemen. Is the Transvaal hereafter going to be a free, independent community to tax itself? In these circumstances I do not think you would get the money. But if it is going to be, as some people desire it to be, a Crown colony, how are you going to get

the money then? You will, I suppose, have a council or some other body with power to tax that community. You generally pay the Crown colony the compliment of allowing it to elect part of that council. But there are colonies where it is necessary always to keep in your hands a majority of nominated members. Just conceive the future of this emancipated Johannesburg with a majority of nominated members taxing according to the views of Downing Street, and not of Johannesburg! That is one view. Before we impose all these burdens, whether by borrowing or by taxation, we should take some security for getting a charge on these funds which would relieve the taxpayers of Great Britain. I hope, therefore, either now or at some future stage of these financial discussions, we shall have some security by some sort of arrangement. I do not think it would be impossible, and if secured there will be very great satisfaction in the country generally. I entirely support the general principles of finance as stated by the right hon. Gentleman. Of course, we reserve to ourselves the right on a future occasion to discuss the details and the application of these principles.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I think the right hon. Gentleman is premature in requiring the Chancellor of the Exchequer to impose a charge upon the Transvaal at this moment. We have not captured the Transvaal yet, neither have we any authority there. When we have it will be time enough—

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It may be too late.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: If you want apples you go to an orchard, and if you want gold you cannot go to a better place than to a gold mine. I, of course, anticipate that there will be the greatest readiness on the part of the millionaires, who have incurred a debt to this country by being released from the grinding tyranny of the Transvaal, to contribute to the expenses of the war. They were subjected to a financial tyranny, which, perhaps, is the tyranny of all others which millionaires would be most anxious to be relieved of. I have no doubt that means will be found, if we do get to Pretoria, to levy a contribution on the millionaires referred to by the

right hon. Gentleman. I observe that the Chancellor of the Exchequer displays a great want of imagination in his Budgets—especially in this Budget. He has kept to the old ground, and has invented nothing new. Last year I suggested to the right hon. Gentleman a tax on diamonds. We import $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions worth of diamonds every year from one of the places which should be most grateful to us for being rescued from the rule of the Boers. That release has been effected through Her Majesty's Government, and I think it is well worth the consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether instead of taxing tobacco 300 per cent. and tea 60 per cent., and making the general average of the duty on four or five articles 100 per cent., he should not tax diamonds at something like 100 per cent. also. That would give him £4,500,000, in addition to which there could be a licence for sale and, indeed, a licence for wear. The officials of the Treasury, to whose ability—especially the ability of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—the Prime Minister testified in another place, should have no difficulty whatever in getting an adequate tax out of diamonds. The only general remark I desire to make is that, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer and every other financier have constantly denounced our fiscal system as being extremely unsound, the right hon. Gentleman has at this moment of extremity adopted and intensified all the unsoundness of that system. Complaint has been made by the First Lord of the Admiralty, by the First Lord of the Treasury, and by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself that the objects of taxation in articles of consumption are much too few, but the right hon. Gentleman has kept them as few as they were, and has largely increased the duty upon them. I think this is very unfortunate. It has also been pointed out again and again that the exemptions and abatements in connection with direct taxation are very much abused, and are more than they ought to be. The right hon. Gentleman has kept on all the abatements, while increasing the income tax by 50 per cent. The First Lord of the Treasury has pointed out that although the total income of this country is 1,500 millions, only 700 millions are assessed, but instead of getting income tax either from the 1,500 millions or the 700 millions, it is taken only from incomes

Mr. Gibson Bowles.

which are over £160 a year. But even as it is the exemptions and abatements are such that instead of getting 40 millions the Chancellor of the Exchequer only gets 25 millions. These abatements and exemptions ought not to be given, because if an abatement is given to one man another man has to be taxed for it. If there is to be any such thing at all it ought to be by annual grant of this House, which would be considered every year, and renewed or not renewed as the case might be. Then the right hon. Gentleman extends abatements to a man with £700 a year. He is not a poor man; he is well able to maintain his station in life without any outside assistance, and he ought to pay his small and infinitesimal share of the income tax as well as anyone else. I quite understand that a man with £100 a year should get a special exemption, but if a man with £1,000 a year is now required to pay 1s. income tax the man with £700 a year ought to be required to pay it also. If not, the latter is paying less than his share and the former more, and every addition to the income tax intensifies the inequality. The right hon. Gentleman objects to diamonds. Will he take furs or feathers or musical instruments? I have made out an interesting list which shows that we import lace to the value of $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions, embroidery one million, artificial flowers £600,000, feathers $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions, musical instruments, including, I suppose, the instruments brought over by the German bands, £1,100,000, and diamonds $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions. These give a total of £11,000,000, which altogether escape taxation. If a customs duty were put on them on the same scale as on spirits, tea, tobacco, and wine, they would realise £11,000,000 of revenue. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman has completely abandoned the principles of the First Lord of the Treasury and himself, and has given the go-by to what he told us a few years ago was a pressing necessity, namely, to find further sources of taxation. I have presented him with half a dozen sources, and I hope he will consider them. The right hon. Gentleman, of course, has had an enormously increased expenditure to meet. I have made a calculation whereby I find that if he had been able to adhere to the precedent of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for

West Monmouthshire, and not have allowed the expenditure to exceed the Estimates, the country would have saved £100,000,000. It has fallen to his unhappy lot since 1896 to have added the sum of not less than £100,000,000 to taxation. I do not say it is his fault; but he has colleagues. As to the very large decrease in expenditure as compared with the Estimates, I do hope that the right hon. Gentleman will not plume himself on that fact. A surplus of £5,000,000 over the Estimates is only a mistake of £5,000,000. So long as that is understood, and credit is not taken for it, I will pass away from it. What I wish to point out is that £2,000,000 out of that £5,000,000 come from the death duties. It is entirely due to the right hon. Gentleman opposite that it has become absolutely impossible to calculate the returns from the death duties. The result is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has never made a mistake of less than a million, and this year he has made a mistake of two millions.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Always in excess.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: What does that matter? The effect is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been given a million or two to divert from ordinary courses. He has always used his surpluses for his own purposes. Previous to the Finance Act of 1894 no duties were calculated with more certainty than the death duties, but after the extraordinary graduations introduced by that Act it is now impossible to estimate them with precision. The death duties amounted to 17½ millions this year, but if the old system had remained they would have amounted to 15 millions, and be on a much sounder foundation and be capable of being accurately estimated. Therefore I do not think that the increase in the death duties is entirely a matter for approval. They are now more uncertain than they were formerly. With reference to the loan which the right hon. Gentleman proposes, whether it should be terminable in ten years or whether it should be added to the permanent debt depends on the purpose to which it is to be put. I do not know what he may have in his mind, but evidently we are to give him *carte blanche*. I suspect he is going to offer

some inducements to the people in the Savings Bank to take some of it. I do not know, but I presume we shall all be asked to take shares in it. I think, however, that the purpose to which this loan is to be put is of the most permanent character. If we fail in the South African campaign, we will not only lose South Africa, but we will certainly, or probably, lose India; we shall imperil the whole of the Empire, and bring these islands themselves into increased danger. On the other hand, if we succeed, we will avoid all that risk, and we will endow posterity with an increased Empire on a more solid foundation. If that be so, posterity should bear its share. If it be that we are about to do a permanent work in South Africa, not for South Africa alone, but also for the Empire and for these islands, surely it is not right to expect us to pay in ten years a loan contracted in order to give a permanent benefit to posterity. I think that the argument for making the loan a permanent addition to the debt from that point of view is very strong. If, on the other hand, instead of improving the position of the Empire we make it worse, then we ought to pay. But assuming, as I do, that we are certain to achieve great benefits for posterity, posterity should pay its share. This is a very severe Budget. The taxpayer will severely feel it, not only the income-tax payer, but also the consumer of dutiable commodities. As to income-tax, I entirely fail to see why a man with an income of over £700 a year has to pay the entire tax, whereas a man with an income under that amount gets an exemption. It is unfortunate that this large addition should be made to the income tax without making any attempt to remove the inequalities caused by the abatements and exemptions which apply to it. My objection to the Budget is not one of principle, so much as that it leaves the imperfections of our fiscal system where they are, and intensifies them to a very considerable extent. With regard to the loan, I am not at all clear that instead of being a loan for a temporary period it ought not to be permanently added to the Debt.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): I wish humbly to join with the right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen who have congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a thoroughly straight-

forward, courageous, and sound Budget. He has had at least as much applause from this side of the House as he has had from his own side. Whatever may be the supposed divisions in the Liberal Opposition, we shall all unite in praising the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There are one or two points in connection with the Budget on which I would wish to say something. I am wholly unable to agree with my hon. friend opposite in his proposition that the loan to be raised should be a permanent addition to the debt. I do not take up that ground on the footing that the benefits from this war will be merely temporary. No doubt the war will very much strengthen our position at the Cape, and if the objects of the war are realised it will confer a permanent benefit on the Empire, but I feel very much that we ought to be reducing, not increasing, the National Debt. The National Debt constitutes our war chest, and is the one way by which we can put the Empire into a position of permanent defence. That brings me to the question of the way in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to treat the Sinking Fund. I entirely agree that it would be absurd to pay off with one hand when we are borrowing with the other. The ground which the Chancellor of the Exchequer took last year for the suspension of the Sinking Fund was that it was wasteful to go on redeeming Consols at a large premium. But they are not at a great premium now, and it is probable they will go down further, because the Chancellor of the Exchequer is about to put thirty-five millions of comparatively short securities on the market, with the result that holders of Consols will sell in order to buy the new securities. In that state of things I should have thought that of all times when the purchase of Consols was convenient and useful for the purposes of the Sinking Fund this was the very best opportunity. It is not a case of redeeming them at 111, but at 101, or maybe, less. I am certain the Chancellor of the Exchequer considered this very carefully, and no doubt he thinks that in the main he is taking the best course, but I should like to be satisfied that it would not have been a better course to have borrowed more largely on these new short securities, the shortness of which is likely to keep them from going to a premium, and purchased Consols at their present low

Mr. Haldane.

rate. One thing I was very glad to hear, and that is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer intends to take the issue of these new securities into his own hands. We have too much experience of loans issued by the nation getting into the hands of contractors, who speedily realise the premiums which should belong to the nation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has shown great wisdom in taking the rather unusual course of keeping the issue in his own hands, and I hope he will be rewarded by securing for the nation a full premium. The real interest in this Budget will arise when we know the period within which this loan is to be redeemed. I infer it is to be redeemed within ten years; I hope a good deal within ten years. Of course, the Chancellor of the Exchequer says it would be premature to announce the determination of the Government in regard to the period of the redemption before the conclusion of the war; but if he takes that course he will have added another feature to the courageous and straightforward policy which characterises this Budget. There will be a permanent advantage in this. It is right that posterity should pay something, but I look upon the policy of reducing the National Debt as the true source of our material strength in the future. I hope, therefore, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in addition to taking the step of laying a large part of the cost of war on taxation, will still further reassure the Committee by announcing his determination to pay off the new loan within a comparatively short time. I am not in the position to weigh the matter with the expert knowledge he has, but it seems to me he has come to a sound decision in issuing the new loan in the form of short securities which will not go to a large premium; and it will put his successor in a position of much greater strength than if a different course had been taken. On the whole hon. Members ought to congratulate themselves in the course the Government have adopted; and the country is under a debt of gratitude to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the straightforward and courageous way in which he has faced the financial emergency.

*SIR FREDERICK DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): I have listened with great interest to the clear

statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I must express my admiration for the firmness of his finance. I think the way in which the country will take his Budget proposals will depend a good deal on their knowledge of what will be the full result of the issue of the short loans. There is no doubt that the feeling of the country is very strongly in favour of the Transvaal being made to pay, after the war is brought to a successful conclusion, for what it has cost this country. If the country has that assurance, it will produce a great effect. When the Transvaal was taken over by this country in 1877, there was half a crown in the Treasury. When it was handed back, the income was £200,000; while the last return of the Transvaal Government showed a Budget of nearly five millions of money. It has been stated by many Uitlanders, who know very well what they are saying, that they paid no less than 89 per cent. of the taxes of the Transvaal; but suppose they only paid 80 per cent., that would have amounted to four millions a year paid by the Uitlanders. We know what was done with that money. Mr. Kruger and his oligarchy devoted what they did not take for themselves to the purchase of guns, ammunition, and all warlike stores, to be used against this country. Now, when we have freed the Transvaal from the Boer tyranny, that money will be free for more legitimate purposes. We have heard that it is our intention to bring this war to a definite conclusion, we don't care at what cost; and therefore I do think that the country has a right to know that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in taking these short loans, intends that they shall be redeemed from the resources of the Transvaal. If we take a loan of fifty millions and put it into a sinking fund for fifty years at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., the amount that would have to be paid by the Transvaal would be £1,045,000 a year. I was talking the other day to one of the African millionaires, and he said to me—

"We shall be only too happy if you tax us for a short number of years, to enable the cost of the war to be liquidated. We should be only too glad to pay for the feeling of security and justice which we should enjoy under the British Government, but which we never felt under President Kruger and his oligarchy. We never knew what would happen to us; what would be commandeered, or what new monopolies for dynamite and what railway scandals would be perpetrated by the Hol-

landers. We are willing to pay if we only get justice, and know where we are."

I think it will be found when we have conquered that country, and when we make our reforms, that we have a perfect right to place taxes upon it for a certain time, sufficient to pay the cost of the war—a cost which ought certainly not to be paid by the people of this country. We pay enough in the lives we have lost. That cannot be repaired; but there is no reason why the money should go into the pockets of the millionaires. That point is one which I think will very much strengthen the feeling of the country in regard to the Budget.

*MR. HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): I would be very grateful to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he would kindly give to the House a little more explanation in regard to the stamps which it is his intention to impose on contracts other than those entered into on the Stock Exchange. Does he propose to levy these contract stamps also on contracts entered into on the Corn Exchange, the Iron Exchange, the Coal Exchange, or the Cotton Exchange?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No; only brokers' contract notes of the same description as brokers' contract notes on the Stock Exchange.

*MR. HOLLAND: I do not know whether that covers ordinary trade contracts.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Oh, no.

MR. HOLLAND: If the stamp duties are not to be levied on trade contracts, I have nothing more to say on that point. I trust that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not receding from the firm and sound principle which he announced last autumn, that the gold mines of the Transvaal should pay a fair share of the cost of the campaign. I was rather afraid, from his observation that there would be very heavy charges to be paid for compensation in Natal and the Cape, and that they would have the effect of increasing the burdens on the mines, that he was modifying his opinion, and that he did not now consider that the mines could pay the large contributions at first expected for

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxvii, p. 515-16.

the cost of the war. I trust, however, that the owners of these mines will not escape from any fair obligations which can clearly be shown to be their due, because undoubtedly the value of their properties will be largely enhanced as the result of a successful campaign. I cannot agree with the hon. Member for King's Lynn in his regret that there should be abatements and exemptions in the income-tax in regard to certain incomes. I understand the hon. Member is against the principle of the graduation of the income tax; but, for my part, I am heartily in favour of it, so far as it can be carried out, and indeed I would do what I could to extend the principle further. I should have been glad if the Chancellor of the Exchequer could have seen his way to exempt incomes of £700 and under from the increased taxation. Nor can I share the regret expressed by the hon. Member for Louth that Irishmen are, as he said, to be taxed so much more than Englishmen on their national drink. The hon. Member protested that for every gallon of whisky an Irishman drank he would be called upon to pay 6d. extra, whereas an Englishman would have to drink eighteen gallons of beer to pay the same sum. But I presume that an Irishman does not always drink his whisky neat, and if he dilutes it with sufficient water the duty on the whisky would not work out at a very much heavier ratio of taxation in proportion to the amount of liquid imbibed than in the case of the Englishman's beer. I think that in view of the very serious deficit of thirty-seven millions, the Chancellor of the Exchequer must now regret that a year ago he did anything to tamper with the Sinking Fund, for if he had not so tampered with it, he would have found that his present financial position would have been stronger than it is.

*MR. HENDERSON (Staffordshire, W.): I wish to give expression to the feeling of satisfaction with which I listened to the statement of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as to the mode in which he proposes to raise the large sum he requires. The course he intends to take in the issue of terminable bonds is a wise one, and must commend itself to every business mind. It will be not only economical but sound finance. If issued in the form of Consols, in times of pressure the necessity for the redemption of the debt now in-

Mr. Holland.

curring might be overlooked, but the redemption of these securities must be provided for, because of the fact of the date of their redemption being stamped on the face of them. One remark of the right hon. Gentleman gave me a great deal of pleasure, namely, that he did not propose to adopt the common course of issuing these securities—whatever form they may ultimately assume—by tender, but to issue them at a fixed price to the general public, so that both the small and large investor may be able to acquire them on the same terms. If that is done I feel sure that the response will be very large indeed. For these reasons I beg to assure the right hon. Gentleman that, so far as I know, the commercial community will hail with acclamation the proposals he has brought before the House this evening.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): I am glad to know that to-night the Chancellor of the Exchequer recognises the errors of his ways in his Budgets of the past two years. If the right hon. Gentleman happens to remember—which I cannot hope that he did in the case of so humble an individual as myself—[Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: I do.]—then I feel highly honoured—I pointed out at the time that there would be no benefit from the reduction in the tobacco duty to the half-ounce man; that unless the Chancellor took £2,000,000 off, instead of £1,000,000, the amount would be so lost in the transfer of business that the poor man would get no benefit from it whatever. I was quite prepared for the Chancellor of the Exchequer reimposing that duty, though I do not agree with it. On the whole the Budget comes up to what was generally expected by those who take an interest in taxation. But I do wish that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the many great abilities which we all admit he possesses in financial matters, would consider the readjustment of the tobacco duty. The man who at present pays 4s. a pound for his tobacco will have to pay this increased tax of 4d. in the pound just the same as the man who pays 10s. a pound. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will see how very unjustly the burden of that taxation falls on different classes. The man who pays 10s. a pound for his tobacco could very well afford to pay the extra 4d. of duty, or, indeed, an extra 1s.; it would not hurt him, because he must be a man of substance and large

income; but it is an unjust allotment of taxation to compel the poor labouring man with only 12s. a week wages to pay the same increase in taxation on his cheap tobacco—which has become almost a necessary of life—as the rich man on his 10s. a pound tobacco. In the case of the income tax the present Chancellor of the Exchequer has done some good service in further scaling that burden. Now, why should he not scale the burden in the case of tobacco? I think I have made my case clear to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I hope that if he cannot do it in this Budget he will give us a promise that he will examine into the matter. It will be remembered that on a previous Budget I voted for a further reduction of the tea duty. Now, that tax is to be increased 50 per cent., and the poor labouring community, both in the towns and rural districts, will pay as much per pound for their common tea as the rich man pays for tea carefully selected and specially picked for his consumption. Although the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not drink tea, he must know that there is an enormous difference between the pleasure obtained in drinking common tea and in drinking the best tea. Now, why should the agricultural labourer on twelve shillings a week pay exactly the same sum to the revenue per pound for his common tea as the man who has an income of £1,000 a year, and can well afford to pay a large price for his high-class tea? It is monstrous, because in many cases tea is the only drink, especially of our peasants and agricultural labourers. I was delighted to hear the appeal which the hon. Baronet the Member for the Uxbridge Division made to his own party and to the Government to see that, while the country intended to continue this war to a successful issue, we should not have to bear the cost of it, not only in the slaughter of our fellow countrymen, but in gold in addition. That is an appeal which will reach the hearts of all classes, whether they are in favour of the war or against it. I was pleased to hear that declaration, because it gives me the opportunity of appealing to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to see that the poor people are not taxed to the same extent as the rich for their tea and tobacco, which are now distinct necessities of their existence. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had a melancholy duty to perform to-night in announcing the large cost

of the war, and the necessity of providing for it in these times of marvellous increase of revenue. He discharged that duty with marked success, and with satisfaction to those who sit opposite him, although I noticed a marked silence prevailing on many benches behind him. I regret the cause of this vastly increased expenditure; but our house, so to speak, is on fire, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer must have the necessary materials to put the fire out, which we hope he will be able to do as soon as possible, and return to the ways of his youth. In the meantime, I do appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to give us some hope that he will entertain the subject I have put before him.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) thought the House and the country were indebted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not only for the proposals he had made, but also for the able speech in which they were explained. A permanent feature of all modern budgets was the death duties, which he had actively supported, although when they were first introduced by the right hon. Member for West Monmouthshire there was a great deal of feeling expressed against them by the party with which he was associated. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had propounded the principle, which underlay the death duties, that the richest should pay most, and that was a principle which on this occasion might have been carried much further by a graduated system of income tax, which would meet some of the objections which had been raised from Ireland. Limited exemptions and graduation were introduced by Sir Stafford Northcote, and the latter might, on the Chancellor's principle, well be carried much further. The only objection which he, as a business man, took to those proposals was that the right hon. Gentleman sought to impose a shilling stamp on brokers' produce contract notes. He could not see why the intervention of a broker should necessarily involve a stamp. On behalf of trade and commerce he would point out that all restrictions on and impediments to trade, however necessary for financial purposes, and however trifling from a pecuniary point of view, were nevertheless evils. This was a tax on industry, and would have a tendency to hamper trade transactions, and should there-

fore be reconsidered. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire raised an artificial objection with regard to the payment of an indemnity for the war by the Transvaal. He contended that it was not for the people of this country as a whole to bear the burden of the war, but that those who caused it or profited by its results should pay the most, whether they were Boers or millionaires.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) also complained of the imposition of a shilling stamp on produce contracts, and pointed out that contract stamps in other trades were very different to contract stamps on the Stock Exchange. The people who went to the Stock Exchange were either gamblers or persons who had money to invest. In the former case they should be made to pay and in the latter they could easily afford to. But with regard to the produce markets he contended that the charge of a shilling on small contracts for £5 worth of produce would be very unfair.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: A contract for £5 worth would only require a penny stamp. For anything less than £100 the charge is only a penny.

MR. LOUGH said that if that was so it was satisfactory, at all events. He would, however, appeal to the right hon. Gentleman not to press the resolution on this point that night, but to allow information to be brought before him before he finally decided upon it.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes.

MR. LOUGH went on to call attention to the conduct of affairs at the custom houses with regard to the clearance of dutiable articles during the time that had elapsed since the announcement that the Budget would be introduced that night. He pointed out that care had been taken to prevent traders keeping back their clearances, by the fact of the new duties being levied up to August next. The rule no doubt was good, but it applied equally to the other side, and that ought to have been observed by the Treasury, which had not, apparently, acted quite fairly in the matter. At the London Custom House that day men had waited from eleven o'clock in the morning with the object of making clearances at the lower scale of duty, and then at half-past

three in the afternoon had been hustled out by twenty policemen without having had an opportunity of effecting any clearances.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Any clearances made to-day must have been made on the lower scale.

MR. LOUGH said his complaint was that, owing to the pressure at the Custom House, no clearance had been possible after eleven o'clock that morning, because no arrangements had been made to combat the extreme pressure that was likely to arise.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but no greater facilities were given to-day for clearances than the usual facilities. What happened on Saturday and to-day was that a number of dealers who trade in tobacco and other dutiable commodities, by no means confined to those on which I propose to impose extra taxation, insisted on going to the custom houses in London and all over the country in order to clear goods at the existing rate of duty. The effect of that is that these gentlemen clear goods at the existing rate, and then when the duty is raised to-night they will immediately charge the extra duty to their customers. Thus they "do" their customers and "do" the Revenue, and I am not going to be a party to that operation.

MR. LOUGH said his point was that the notice which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given as to the promulgation of the increased duty might also have been given as to the introduction of the Budget. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the change in the income tax would affect the payments in the year ending the 31st inst.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No.

MR. LOUGH: The hon. Member for North Louth had complained about the income tax. The change which the Budget proposals make in the taxation of Ireland was certainly most startling. The addition to the income tax would affect Ireland to the extent of £350,000, the increase of 50 per cent. in the tea duty to the extent of £326,000, the increase of one-eighth in the tobacco duty to the extent of £150,000, and the increase of one-eighteenth in the duties

Sir Albert Rollit.

on beer and spirits to the extent of £200,000, making a total increase in the taxation of that country of £1,026,000.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The income tax in Ireland is differently assessed from the income tax in Great Britain.

MR. LOUGH further expressed the view that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had that night, as on previous occasions, under-estimated his revenue and over-estimated his expenditure.

*MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) urged that it was neither just nor expedient nor necessary that any part of the cost of the war in South Africa should be placed upon the taxpayers of this country. We had cheerfully given our blood and treasure, and had contributed to the various funds which had been started in connection with the war; but it was not necessary that we should do more. The experience of the Franco-German war should be followed, and the Republics made to bear the expense of the war. They had declared war against this country, had invaded our territory and annexed part of it, and ought therefore to stand the consequences. As a practical mine-owner who knew the country, he declared that the Transvaal alone was able to pay the whole cost of the war, even if it were £80,000,000 or £100,000,000. It had been often said by members of the Opposition that this war was a capitalists' war, that it was got up for their benefit and at their instigation. Let that no longer be possible to be said, and let the burden of the cost of the war be put upon the mines—the gold mines principally of the Transvaal, which at present produced one-fourth of the whole output of gold in the world and under a just, and honest, and capable Government instead of a corrupt and dishonest and incapable one like that of President Kruger, would ultimately produce twice more, so that even bearing the burden of the cost of the war, the country would thrive and more fortunes be made than before. He hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, though not present, would be made aware of what he had said.

*MR. LOWLES (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I think the working class constituency which I represent will welcome this Budget as a perfectly reasonable and fair one. They are perfectly willing to pay their fair share of the cost of the war,

which they regard as just and righteous, but I hope we shall before this debate closes have an assurance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he regards the £35,000,000 as merely a suspense account, and that he really intends that the two countries with which we are in conflict should ultimately pay the cost of the war. I speak with a personal knowledge of the resources of these two countries, and it is not too much to say that at the present moment—

Attention drawn to the fact that there were not forty Members present (Dr. TANNER, Cork County, Mid). House counted, and forty Members being found present,

*MR. LOWLES (continuing): The public lands in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State are worth tens of millions of pounds, and would alone readily provide all the expenses of the war. With regard to contract notes, the tendency in the sales of produce at the present time, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer will see if he looks to the catalogues of Mark Lane and Mincing Lane, is to offer goods in very small lots. He said his proposal was to put a duty of 1s. on contract notes, and while it is true that the right hon. Gentleman has modified that to a 1d. in transactions under £100, I am not quite sure whether, if you consider the multitude of transactions and the smallness of many of them, it will be worth collecting £150,000 a year.

MR. SOUTTAR (Dumfriesshire): I have no desire to obstruct the passing of the resolutions, nor do I think of objecting to the nature of the resolutions themselves. We must all feel that the Budget is an honourable one, and that the right hon. Gentleman has, as far as possible, carried out the best financial principles in connection with it. It is, however, a matter of regret that the duty on tea, at any rate, should have been increased. We have been accustomed to hear Chancellors of the Exchequer state how desirable it would be to have a free breakfast table, and to cease from taxing the necessities of life. It may not appear to some that tea is a necessary of life, but I have seen enough of the lives of the exceedingly poor especially to know that to them tea is indeed a necessary of existence. There are many places where the poor people take tea morning, noon, and night, and we should, therefore, have the strange

anomaly of these exceedingly poor people paying a larger proportion of the tax than the very wealthy; £1,750,000 will come out of the purse of the poor, so that the washerwoman will be paying more than the millionaire in this matter. I am glad the Budget has been spread over many classes. If people are anxious for this war—and I fear a great majority of the population are—they should bear their fair share of the expenditure, and be made to feel the responsibility of going to war by having to pay for it. I trust that something eventually will be done on the lines suggested by the hon. Gentleman opposite—that the money should eventually be raised from the Transvaal Government. I have nothing to say about that at present; I think it would be better to conquer the Transvaal Government before we discuss that sort of thing. But in saying that, let it be clearly understood that the real meaning is not so much to raise the money from the Transvaal Government as to raise it from the mines. I think our mining friends have shown their hands just a little bit too soon. Quite recently it has been clearly laid before us that they expect to profit by this war to the extent of many millions annually. I could have desired that the men who are about to profit should have had a greater share of the fighting, but since that has not been I hope that those who made the quarrels will be made to pay the cost.

*MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I would take issue with the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. I am a tea-drinker myself, and never drink spirits from year's end to year's end, but I am sure that those who, like myself, are tea-drinkers quite recognise the propriety of tea bearing some measure of this expenditure. It is quite certain that a very large number of the community, like myself, no longer either smoke or drink spirits, and therefore it is quite legitimate that such worthy and excellent people should bear their share of the burdens of this great war. The hon. Gentleman somewhat criticised the action of the mining interest in the Transvaal, and went on to say that they had not done their part of the fighting. As a matter of fact, the Uitlander corps in Natal have done everything that men could do to show of what stuff they are made. They have borne the burden and the heat of the

great battles in Natal, and I do not think it lies in the mouth of any Member of this House to say that the mining interests of the Transvaal have not taken their share in the fighting.

MR. SOUTTAR: I should be very sorry to be misunderstood. I did not refer to those humble Uitlanders who have taken part in the war, but to the mining speculators and capitalists.

*MR. LAWRENCE: As a matter of fact, it is not everybody who can do the fighting. According to their age and period in life these people have done what they could, and certain other gentlemen interested in mining have openly told us that they can bear a considerable share of this cost. I am quite certain they do not desire to shirk their share of the burden any more than those who are younger than themselves have shown any desire to shirk their share of the fighting. But I rose principally to press upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer that when he is putting an increased duty on spirits he ought in justice to the colony of the West Indies to have regard to the old and burning question of the surtax on rum. There is nothing new about this question, but it is a matter which presses very heavily upon the people in the West Indies. In these days when we have already felt how our difficulties in South Africa have been aggravated by the neglect in the past of the mother country towards her colonies in that part of the world, it becomes us here at home while we have time to consider the interests of the West Indies, because they are far separated from us and are only a small community. I should like to remind the Committee how the case stands. I am quite certain that if only the facts were more fully known to the Committee and to the people of England, they would see the propriety of the course which I and many before me have over and over again recommended. The fact is that at present rum proceeding from the West Indies has a special tax upon it, together, I should say, with foreign imported spirits, of fourpence per gallon. This is put on as a surtax and as a duty to countervail the excise here on the manufacture of British spirits. That is to say, in order that British spirits may have an equal chance of competing, all spirits coming from the colonies and foreign countries are handicapped and

Mr. Souttar.

countervailed with a duty equivalent to fourpence per gallon. That may be perfectly fair with regard to foreign spirits, but when I remind the Committee that in the West Indian colonies rum is produced under exactly the same regulations as to excise and exactly the same local regulations as British spirits are here, it will be seen that it is obviously a gross injustice to our colonies beyond the seas that they should have to pay an extra tax of fourpence when competing in the local markets here. When the Committee remembers that the legislatures of the West Indies are actually under the thumb of Downing Street, and that all the regulations are subject to the fiat of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Colonies, it will be seen that it is all the more unfair to the West Indies that their local produce should be taxed with this fourpence on the plea that they themselves are not liable to similar excise duties as are British spirits at home. The contrary is the case. They are subject locally to exactly the same excise regulations, equivalent in stringency and amount, as are British spirits here. But yet, directly they come here to compete in the open market, they are taxed fourpence per gallon. The injustice of this is shown more clearly when I inform the Committee that whereas British spirits used for purposes of methylation pay no duty, West Indian rum, which can be used equally for methylating purposes, is subject to this fourpence per gallon, and, in consequence, is practically ruled out of the market for methylation. Then, again, owing to this fourpence, it is very much handicapped for purposes of blending. The Committee will therefore perceive that our fellow-countrymen and fellow-subjects in the West Indies are unduly handicapped in this matter of the fourpence. The feeling in those parts is such that I really cannot exaggerate it, but I will just quote a resolution passed by a conference held at Barbados in 1898. The conference was of delegates from all the islands of the West Indies—

“ This meeting would strongly urge upon the Imperial Government the injustice of the surtax imposed upon colonial rum, and the abolition of 4d. per gallon. By this means a large quantity of rum would be used for blending.”

If this was merely a local feeling, though I should still say it was most properly a subject for consideration, I should not, perhaps, so persistently urge the matter in

this House—although I think on its merits the people in the West Indies have clearly the best of the case—but the West Indian Commissioners who were sent out a few years ago to examine into the question also said that it was a very great hardship, and that this levy seemed to be unsound in principle, and they strongly advocated the abolition of the surtax. It is frequently very difficult on ordinary occasions to get a reduction of such a duty, but when, as on this occasion, we have a proposal—and, no doubt, generally, a very wise proposal—that there should be an increase of the duty on spirits, I think that the West Indies have every reason now, after an interval, again to urge their rightful claim on the people of the mother country that they should have equal opportunities of selling in the British market their home-made spirits. They do not ask for any preferential treatment; they simply say that, inasmuch as they have local excise similar to our own in Great Britain, this fourpence, which is admittedly put on to countervail the local disadvantage of the excise, should be done away with. This matter has been raised over and over again for the last twenty years, but, as a matter of fact, because the people of the West Indies at present are few in number they are thought to be of no consideration. But, according to my humble view, the time may come when the islands of the West Indies will be very much appreciated, owing to the opening of the Panama and Nicaragua Canal, and then their interests will come home to the people of this country. It is all very well for the mother country to wake up at last and find she has neglected her colonies, as we have lately done in South Africa; but it is better that the colonies should be taught to cherish the mother country. They should not be taught to think that because their people are few and they are far away from the mother country their interests are therefore of no concern. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has on previous occasions said that this is a small matter, and the West Indian Commissioners, I believe, say that if the injustice were removed it would not actually save the sugar industry. But I am prepared to say from my own personal experience that in Jamaica, where the estates are small, and where the profits on an ordinary estate cannot be reckoned at much more than £500 or

£600 a year, this fourpence certainly reduced the income of the farmer of sugar by £175 or £200 a year. Even in other islands where rum is not so much a consideration as in Jamaica, where thirty-five gallons of rum are made from every ton of sugar, it will be seen that the difference is very appreciable. While people on the Front Bench, who are accustomed to large incomes, talk about this as being a small consideration, those who know what the small profits of farmers are can see that an amount of £100 a year to the profits on a farm is a very appreciable addition. Therefore I speak with some feeling, because I know how loyal these men of the West Indies are, and how they feel the burning injustice with which their interests have been overlooked for many a long year. I speak with some warmth, because what I say I say with knowledge. I therefore hope that when I venture to put down, as I believe I can, a motion for some modification of the proposal as to the sixpence per gallon on spirits, in favour of it being, say, twopence in the case of rum imported from the West Indies, the right hon. Gentleman will give it his kindly and considerate attention.

*MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.) pointed out that in the Budget there was not a word about putting a tax upon the unearned increment of land. As a typical instance the great distilleries of which he was at the head might be taken. They stood upon sixteen acres of land in one place and upon eight acres in another, but while the industry carried on in those distilleries, employing a large number of people, was to be more heavily taxed, not one penny of taxation was proposed to be put upon the ground rents of the landlord. Distilling was one of the few industries left to the people of Ireland, and why should it be taxed in this way while the unearned increment of those who "neither toil nor spin" was allow to go scot free? There was another matter in regard to spirits to which he would like to call attention. According to the Treasury returns, something like 1,600,000 gallons of spirits were annually imported from Denmark, Sweden, and Germany. Those spirits were made from the very refuse of corn, wood, and, it was even said, leather. Those 1,600,000 gallons were supposed to be made into methylated spirits, but only 8,000 gallons were devoted to that purpose. What became of the rest? Did anybody ever hear of a man selling Danish

Mr. Lawrence.

or Swedish spirits, or German whisky? Would the Government deny the fraud? The right hon. Gentleman should get a little expert knowledge of what he was taxing. By all means give the West Indies a chance, but also let it not be forgotten that the heart's blood was being drained from the people of Ireland. Why was not an embargo put upon these imported spirits from Germany, Sweden, and Denmark, instead of this fraud being actually connived at by the Government? They had this great question of the unearned increment of land which was not taxed in any way because hon. Members opposite had all their interests in land, while those who had no land were made to bear the brunt of these wars. The proposals now made had been sprung upon the House, and he would like the Government to have taken more time, and to have thought out some way of raising their money without injuring the Irish people and their trade. It was no use the Government going on increasing taxation on Irish industries without increasing the duties on spirits from Germany, Denmark and Sweden. How long were those foreign whiskies going to be sold in this country as Irish whisky; and yet not one penny extra was to be put upon foreign spirits. He did ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to relieve Ireland of a portion of this burden by putting a large tax on foreign spirits and seeing that a different coloured permit was used for foreign spirits. He thought if the right hon. Gentleman went into the matter he would acknowledge that Ireland had been badly treated, and he looked for his kindly consideration of this question.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I shall not attempt to follow the hon. Member who has just sat down in his remarks about foreign spirits. If it is true that they are sold in this country as Irish and Scotch whisky, I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be able to stop that practice. Perhaps the hon. Member opposite will excuse me if I say the large firms to which he alludes do not look as if they were ground down very much by the Saxon. The question of the taxation of land is an old one which I will not discuss upon the present occasion. As regards the Budget itself, I must say that I am glad the Government have had the boldness to put forward a Budget in which all classes are called upon

to pay a reasonable and fair share towards the cost of the present war. I am sure that this heavy expenditure has been incurred in a war which is certainly popular, and which is believed to be just by the great bulk of the people, and I am certain that the people themselves are willing and anxious to make an effort to pay the bill. I do not believe in a patriotism which simply shouts and waves flags, and which objects to pay when the bill comes in. I am sure that there has never been such a feeling throughout the country concerning the justice of the war, and the great mass of the people, although they do not like to pay extra taxes, are quite prepared to make any reasonable sacrifice. The only thing I would suggest, if there is any change to be made, is that the duty on spirits should have been 1s. per gallon instead of 6d. Though many of us drink a certain amount of spirits, when you come to think of our enormous alcohol bill—amounting to something like £180,000,000 or £190,000,000 per annum—it does look like a fair subject for taxation. I am not talking of it from a moral standpoint, but if that large sum can be spent in drink in periods of prosperity, it does not look as though we should be overtaxing it by increasing the tax on spirits to 1s. per gallon. I am glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has included tea, because I think those persons who do not drink spirits or smoke tobacco, but who drink tea, will be willing and glad to pay a share towards the cost of the war. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire referred to the Transvaal, and he seemed to think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have stated how much that country was going to pay towards the cost of the war. I agree with the hon. Member for King's Lynn that it will be time enough to go into that question when we have got to Pretoria. I should like to say that, in my judgment, it would be right and proper that the Transvaal should pay a substantial part of the cost of this war; but I do not think it can be said that this is a war simply for the Transvaal, for it is not only the Transvaal but the whole of South Africa that is concerned. I go further, and say that it is a war which concerns the very existence of the great Empire to which we belong. It would be unfair in every sense to require the Transvaal to pay the whole cost, but it

would be reasonable, when peace is made, that the Transvaal should be required to pay something. I believe that the great mass of the capitalists of that colony will be willing to pay a fair share provided they can only secure a stable, fair, and just government. I am convinced that the revenue from the Transvaal will be sufficient to pay over and over again the interest on a large loan, and I do not see any reason why that should not be done. It was my good fortune to be in the Transvaal when the war broke out, and I do say most emphatically that a great number of the Uitlanders have done excellent work in the war. I saw the Imperial Light Horse, who have taken such a prominent part in the defence of Ladysmith. A great many of those men came down from Johannesburg with me, and they enrolled themselves, and have been fighting for us against the Transvaal up to the present time. Mr. Davis and Mr. Sampson are two of them, and both are officers who have been seriously wounded in this war. Concerning the loan which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has given rather mysterious hints about, I hope he will take this opportunity of making use of this loan as an experiment for enabling persons to obtain smaller sums, for this has been a very popular system in France and other places. We have done a great deal by opening Consols in small sums, and this has been most advantageous in the development of thrift and financial arrangements amongst the poorer classes, and I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be able to see his way to divert some of the funds which now go in other directions to encouraging deposits of very small sums. It will require some care, but I think something may be done, and the result will be that he will get the money practically at par and without many of the disadvantages of forming a large and permanent loan. I also agree with the right hon. Gentleman in having it a short loan. One of the mistakes we made in our National Debt has been the making it a permanent debt, for it would have been quite as easy and practicable for it to have been made a terminable debt extending over a considerable period of years. The difference is almost infinitesimal, and in future it would be better to make these loans of a terminable nature. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes this year to suspend the operation of the Sinking Fund. He made considerable

alterations in this fund last year, and I was one of those who strongly objected to it. I opposed it then, and I always shall do under those circumstances. I think it was a mistake to do it last year, and I think so still. But this year the circumstances are quite different, and this seems to be a reasonable and proper time for suspending the operation of the Sinking Fund. It seems to me to be one of the great objects of this Sinking Fund that it produces elasticity, and I quite approve of the step which has been taken this year. The only other point that I wish to refer to is the question of the death duties. Although I objected to some of the details of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire's scheme when he brought it in in the year 1894, I have always approved of the system of these death duties. It seems reasonable in every way that these enormous fortunes should contribute a larger proportion than they have hitherto done to the taxation of the country, and I cannot conceive of a stronger case than the one instanced to-day of a man living all his life on a small sum and leaving millions behind him. I think it is only right that a large portion of that money should come to the State. This system has been so beneficial to the State that it seems to me that at the present moment we might be more merciful in making remissions in certain cases. In the year 1894 I moved an Amendment to the effect that those persons who were killed in the service of the Crown and belonging either to the Army or the Navy should have their estates exempt from the death duties if they were of small amount. Inasmuch as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has derived £17,500,000 from these death duties, I hope he will be able on this occasion—looking to the interests of those of our fellow subjects who have been killed in this war—to consider favourably the granting of some relief to those estates the owners of which have been killed in the prime of life. I am sure the loss to the revenue would be very slight, and it is very hard indeed for the widow of an officer who leaves £2,000 or £3,000 behind him if she is called upon to pay these heavy death duties. I hope he will consider favourably an Amendment which I shall put down in order to bring about a change in this respect. Taking the Budget scheme as a whole, I think we

Mr. Bartley.

may fairly say it meets the wants of the time. It takes a considerable part of the cost of the war out of present taxation, which is right and proper. I myself do not object to it being taken out of the present or coming year, because I feel quite sure that the public are willing to do what is necessary at the present moment, and I am sure that it is always wise when we have to incur large expenditure to face it boldly, because when we look into the facts there is no question that this nation, whatever our faults may be, is the lightest taxed nation in the world. I think we should be prepared to pay the whole cost of this war during the life of the present generation. I am glad to see that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has spread the taxation over all classes of the community, so that every class will bear its fair proportion of the cost of this war.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): There is a great deal I admire in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, although he did not seem to be a strong enthusiast in favour of the war. I admire his observations in regard to the monstrous and preposterous proposals that appeared in *The Times* this morning, that we should expend permanently £20,000,000 per annum upon the Army and Navy. If we were to do that what would become of old age pensions and all other social reforms? All our money would go in military expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman laid down certain principles about the mode in which the money for the war should be obtained, and said he wished the war mainly to be carried on upon a cash basis. I cheered those sentiments, but I am bound to say that I did not find that the right hon. Gentleman, when he came to the details, entirely carried out his own excellent principles. He told us that at the commencement of the great French War we borrowed I forget how many millions of money, and afterwards raised a very large amount of the money by taxation.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I said £391,000,000.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The amount was £391,000,000 which was raised, and one-third of the amount of the cost of that war was raised by taxation. In the Crimean War the right hon. Gentleman

gave us figures and said it had cost us £67,000,000, and of this sum £32,000,000 had been raised by taxation. That is almost one half. Then he told us that this war, counting the expenditure which he anticipates will be the minimum for the present year, will cost £60,000,000. He has been impressing upon us what was done in the cases of the French War and the Crimean War, but is he now going to raise one half? Instead of proposing to raise this one half he proposes to raise £14,000,000, and that is not one half, in fact, it is not one quarter. Why did he not stand to those principles which he so much admired in Mr. Pitt? I think he will admit that there is a slight difference between his principles and his practice. He laid down another sound principle, that everybody should pay proportionately towards the cost of this war, and he made a difference between the income tax on the rich and indirect taxes which are supposed to weigh more heavily upon the poor. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned tea. Tea costs roundly 1s. per pound with the duty. The right hon. gentleman increases the duty on tea by twopence; in other words, he increases the cost of tea to the poor by one sixth. Then he went on to tax beer and spirits, and said he was going to levy 1s. upon a barrel of beer. Now, what does a barrel of beer cost? It costs 36s.; that is to say, he only increases the tax on beer by one thirty-sixth. Whisky costs about £1 a gallon with the duty, and he adds 6d. to that, which only increases the tax upon it by one fortieth. So that the poor tea drinker is obliged to pay one sixth more on his beverage, the beer drinker one thirty-sixth more, and the spirit drinker one fortieth more. I want to know why this distinction is made between the person who drinks tea and the person who drinks beer or spirits. Why does not the right hon. Gentleman stand to his grand principle that every person is to be taxed proportionately for this war? I hope, for my part, there will be a division against this increase in the tax on tea. I am opposed to it myself, and I stand to that fine old principle "a free breakfast table." [Ministerial laughter.] We have actually now got to this point, that absolutely the soundest principle of Liberalism is laughed and jeered at. Reading an article in *The Times*, I saw this principle referred to as absolute clap-trap. That is the difference between us, for Gentlemen

opposite think it is clap-trap, while we think it is a sound principle, but we will leave the country to judge between us. I have always voted for a reduction of the duty on tea, and I have always urged that there should be no duty on tea at all. There is a wide difference between drinkers of beer and spirits and the drinkers of tea. Beer and spirits are certainly luxuries, for nobody is obliged to drink them, but practically almost every person is obliged to drink tea or coffee. Tea is essentially the beverage of the very poor, and it is the beverage of every honest old woman in the country. Tea is a domestic institution which exists in almost every family throughout the country. Even taking the poorest people in our workhouses, tea is what the old women want, and there is very often a dispute among the guardians whether they should have more or less of it. If you add this twopence there will be a large number of highly respectable poor persons who will have to go without this very essential beverage, and I really think the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have done well to have left it alone. We have always protested against any duty on tea, and we ought to protest against it if we remain true to that grand old principle "the free breakfast table." The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to raise £6,000,000 by the income tax. I almost regret that when the right hon. Gentleman dwelt so long upon the exemptions to the income tax he did not seize the opportunity of making that tax more fair to those who have to pay it. I should have thought that he would have made the tax larger upon incomes derived from investments and less upon incomes derived from trades and professions. This would have been an exceedingly good opportunity to do so. The income tax ought to be paid upon the spending income, and until you make this distinction between income from investments and income from trades and professions the injustice will remain. I notice that hon. Members opposite have not been very enthusiastic over this Budget, and there was a sad silence amongst them when they heard that these poor old women were to be taxed on their tea. Coming events cast their shadows before, and everyone has united in telling the Chancellor of the Exchequer that they cordially agree with him in thinking that the Transvaal millionaires ought to pay a very great deal

of money towards this war. The hon. Gentleman who preceded me told us that they were prepared to pay willingly and cheerfully. They may have virtues of which I am ignorant, but certainly if they wish to pay increased taxation they have more virtues than ordinary human beings.

MR. BARTLEY: What I said was that they would cheerfully pay for a free, proper, and pure government.

MR. LABOUCHERE: What is a pure government? I am afraid if I attempt to discuss the abstract question of what a pure government is that I will be called to order. I will only say that I would be perfectly happy to vote for any proposal that these millionaires should pay any amount of money for the benefits they have derived from the war. I saw, in the report of the Goldfields Company's meeting, that they anticipated making by the war two and a half millions per annum. If that is so, there must be plenty of money, and I hope we shall shear them as closely as we possibly can, whether they like it or not. I have only risen to express my admiration for a great deal of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in doing so I ventured to make these slight criticisms on the manner in which he has carried out his own excellent principles.

SIR J. A. WILLOX (Liverpool, Everton): I desire to say, without discussing general principles, that I think the experience of the Chancellor of the Exchequer must be that tinkering with the tobacco duty is a dangerous and mischievous policy. For nearly sixty years the tobacco duty remained fixed at 3s. 3d. per pound, and during that period there was a gradual and steady development of the trade which yielded constantly increasing revenue to the Exchequer. The first break in that long period was made by Sir Stafford Northcote, when he raised the duty by 4d. The result was most injurious. He checked the progress and development of the trade, and the trade did not yield the revenue expected by the Exchequer. Since then there has been a tendency not only to alter the duty, but to take charge of the processes of manufacture. These experiments have not been at all successful. First of all moisture was limited to 35 per cent., and afterwards to 30 per cent.,

Mr. Labouchere.

and now there is another change of duty. I think, perhaps, there is no stronger evidence of the purely theoretical and experimental character of these changes than in the last two Budgets of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1898 the Chancellor of the Exchequer anticipated that there would be a great increase in the consumption of tobacco, and he predicted that there would be an improvement in the quality of the tobacco sold to the public, and also a reduction in the price. Last year, after having a year's experience, he said:

"I do urge the Committee to give the experiment a fair trial in the interest of the revenue. I do assure them of my complete conviction that if they will do they will reap from it a golden harvest in the future by increased consumption." *

Now, as a matter of fact, these confident hopes have been entirely disappointed. There has been no increase of a substantial character in the consumption, or at any rate no increase sufficient to compensate for a reduction in the duty, and I think all experience tends to show that it would be much better for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to have continued a uniform system of fixed duty without disturbing the trade, or in any way attempting to regulate or control it. With reference to the system now promulgated, of adding fourpence to the duty, I think it is unfortunate. The figure will be entirely indivisible among the masses of the people who are large consumers of tobacco. As a rule the working man buys his tobacco by the ounce or the half ounce, and we know that fourpence on sixteen ounces will enable neither the manufacturer nor the retailer to divide it up into ounces or half ounces. An hon. Gentleman suggests that a farthing per ounce would be the exact equivalent of fourpence per pound, but all experience shows that farthings are not in practice current coins of the realm, and it will therefore be impossible to divide the sum. There is one respect, at all events, in which the trade ought to regard the present arrangement with satisfaction. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has not again attempted to alter the modes and regulations of manufacturers. Two years ago there was a change in the limit of moisture, and the trade is just now beginning to settle down

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxix., p. 1021.

to the new condition of things after having been engaged on a very difficult and complex problem, and it ought to be grateful that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, although he has changed the duty, has not attempted to aggravate that change by interfering with the process of manufacture. I think those who calculate that this change in duty will be a direct benefit to the working man will be grievously disappointed. It is more than probable that while the Chancellor of the Exchequer has increased the duty by an amount which in theory is equal only to a farthing per ounce, in practice the consumer may be required to pay an extra halfpenny per ounce. This is not, I think, the desire of the manufacturers, but at the same time it is difficult to see how a retailer will be able to practically divide the amount among small buyers. I hope that the experience of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer and of his predecessors will be taken as a caution against unduly interfering with the trade. We know from a very long experience that with a fixed duty there had been progress in the development of business, and that changeable and capricious innovations have not proved beneficial to the public, but have proved detrimental to the revenue and inconvenient to the manufacturer. At the same time, I am bound to say that the change now proposed is as equitable as could have been devised, seeing that it is desired to impose on all classes of the community a proportion of the increased taxation. It seems to me that those who use tobacco are fair subjects for taxation, and whether the amount is 4d. or more, they at any rate will not object to it. My criticism is that the amount of the change is such that it is not divisible among the great mass of consumers, and that either the consumer will have to pay an increased amount or the manufacturer will be unduly taxed in his production.

MR. KEARLEY * (Devonport): As regards the complaint of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, it would be well for the Committee to remember what happened when the remission of the tobacco duty took place. The hon. Member complains that the present amount will not be divisible, and that the consumer or else the manufacturer will have to pay. Let us consider what has happened during the last few years. The tobacco manufacturers absolutely appro-

priated in the most barefaced manner 75 per cent. of the remission which was kindly handed over to them as a free gift by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The consumers had no advantage whatever, and of all the increases in duty in this Budget there is none which I am more pleased to see than the increase in the tobacco duty. The position will now be that the consumer will be no worse off, and the manufacturer will have to pay. The manufacturer has appropriated the remission for the last two years, and it was the coolest and most deliberate appropriation I have ever heard of. Within a week of the Budget statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer two years ago all these great manufacturers of tobacco met together. I think the hon. Gentleman was present at that meeting—

SIR J. A. WILLOX: I was not.

MR. KEARLEY: Some member of the firm with which the hon. Member is connected was present. Three meetings were held almost simultaneously, and the point which the hon. Gentleman takes now that it was impossible to give the concession to the public because it could not be divided was taken, and the manufacturers agreed to keep it themselves. The hon. Member for Northampton complained about the increase on tea, and he held up the boon of a free breakfast table. A free breakfast table is a very nice thing when remissions are being distributed, but it would be impossible to urge a free breakfast table when such a large amount of taxation is required for the purposes of the war. I should like to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his courage in distributing the whole of this taxation over all classes of the community. That is one of the most cheerful features of this Budget. From my experience I would say that there will be no objection whatever to the tea duty. [Several HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!] I exclude Ireland because I am not in a position to speak regarding it, but there will be no ill feeling at all in this country, and everyone will gladly pay. You cannot have war without paying taxation, and I think the distribution is a very fair one; if only one class were taxed they would be certain to be grumbling. I would also congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having wisely kept to well-trying revenue producers, not diving to the right or to the left for items

on which to levy taxation. He has very wisely kept to those revenue producers which are certain to realise expectations, and as regards which with existing machinery the cost of collection will not be increased. Of course, putting on or taking off duty sometimes upsets a trade, but we have to put up with that. To impose new duties, however, such as on sugar, would create a very strong feeling. The right hon. Gentleman was very wise, I think, and I must congratulate him on adhering to the regular revenue producers. The position as between direct and indirect taxation has been almost one of equality, the direct taxation being 48 per cent. and the indirect 52 per cent. of revenue collected. Now the balance will be altered and indirect taxation will in future realise five and a half millions, whereas direct taxation will realise six and a half millions, which is not, however, a very serious difference. The only criticism I have to make refers to the stamps on produce brokers' contracts. I anticipate that the right hon. Gentleman will not realise £150,000 on produce brokers' contracts. A stockbroker's contract must pass with each transaction; it is the basis of the whole thing; but there is no obligation on either side with reference to a produce brokers' contract; it is merely a matter of courtesy between broker and dealer, and the effect of the change will be that no contracts will be passed, and consequently the estimate will not be realised. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will realise the difference between a stockbroker's contract and a produce-broker's contract. The former must pass and is indispensable, but the latter is purely optional. It is the custom, I admit, but I think contracts will not in future pass if they have to be stamped. That is an item which the right hon. Gentleman would be almost wise in striking out. I think it will not realise £20,000, and that the right hon. Gentleman's expectations will be disappointed. My views with reference to indirect taxation have changed materially since labour has been so well employed and wages have risen throughout the country generally. The working classes now expect to contribute something. Taking the whole Budget proposals in their entirety, I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer has hit a very happy medium, and that everyone will be satisfied. As to the

Mr. Kearley.

South African question, there is a general feeling in the country that South Africa ought to contribute something to the expenses of the war. It is somewhat premature to suggest as to how it should be levied—one must catch his hare before he can cook it. I do not think, however, that the matter will be overlooked, and if the South African contribution takes the form of a considerable sum annually, it ought to be sufficient to pay the interest on the money borrowed for the war. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his Budget, which I think will meet with approval throughout the length and breadth of the land.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I desire to enter my humble protest against one or two of the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I have also one or two suggestions to make. I am new to the proceedings of the House and new to its Ministers, but after reading an article in the *Morning Post* this morning, where the Chancellor of the Exchequer was described as a man of flexible policy, I thought there was some chance of my suggestions being considered. I must confess, however, that the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman is one that does not indicate he bears the character which that paper gave him. I think many of his proposals are proposals worthy of a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer. When the right hon. Gentleman made a financial statement in October he laid down the lines of his future financial policy with regard to the war, and he indicated that those lines would not be affected either by the extent or duration of the war. He said—

"I have in what I have said formed perhaps an unduly favourable anticipation of the end of this war. It may be so, but even if my anticipations should not be realised, even if we should meet with reverses, and if the war has to be prolonged, and if the sum voted on Friday should be but a part of what we shall have to pay, then we shall appeal to the patriotism of the people next April, and we shall rely that those who have supported us so loyally in the prosecution of this war will not fail us when the proper time comes to pay the bill."

I wish to analyse the present proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the light of that declaration, and I wish to ask whether he is relying sufficiently on the patriotism of the people. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer must have approached his Budget to-

night under the shadow of a great crime—that financial Jameson raid which the right hon. Gentleman made on the Sinking Fund last year, which, unlike its prototype was unfortunately successful, and by which he immediately annexed £2,000,000 from the contributions to the Sinking Fund, for the reduction of the National Debt. I rather think the right hon. Gentleman must regret the action he then took.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Not at all.

*MR. McCRAE: Then I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman is acting on the apostolic principle that he is sinning that grace may much more abound. In the position we are now faced with, I cannot understand the right hon. Gentleman saying that he does not look back with regret on the course he then took. The right Gentleman himself described the Sinking Fund as a reserve in time of emergency. Surely when he reduced that reserve he was doing something which handicapped him in producing his Budget. He ought to feel that he would be all the better if he had that £2,000,000 now. I also think that he aggravated his offence by anticipating the revenues which are to fall in. He anticipated the terminal annuities which were to fall in in 1902, and also the Chancery annuities which were to fall in in 1904.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I did not anticipate the Chancery annuities; but the hon. Member is quite right as regards the other annuities.

*MR. McCRAE: The right hon. Gentleman gave these as his reasons why the contribution to the Sinking Fund should be reduced by two millions; but I was very much surprised to-night to find that the same sums were mentioned as an excuse for not making provision for the repayment of the amount which the right hon. Gentleman is going to borrow. Now, I think that is a departure from the principles of sound finance, and if you make a departure from any principle, sooner or later it will bring its own punishment; and in none sooner than in the region of finance. I think the right hon. Gentleman has met to-night with a certain part of that punishment. I am astonished that the right hon. Gentleman does not realise that when he was gaily drawing his bills on posterity, he little

thought before the financial year was closed he would require to draw this larger Bill for sixty millions. Now, what is the nature of the proposals which the right hon. Gentleman has submitted to-day? I think he is on sound lines when he says that all classes ought to bear a share of this war expenditure; but I do think that the allocation of that expenditure might have been somewhat different. The addition of 2d. per lb. on tea is a proposal to which, I think, those who sit on this side of the House, if they are true to the principles they have always professed, should give their most strenuous opposition. I would suggest that the right hon. Gentleman, instead of putting 2d. per lb. on tea, might have met his views with regard to taxing fairly the different sections of the community by taxing the classes through the income tax, and the masses through the liquor duties and tobacco. If the right hon. Gentleman had proposed an additional shilling per gallon on spirits and an extra 2d. on tobacco that would have given him £1,550,000 against £1,800,000 which he will get from the duty on tea. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will consider that it would be an act of justice to abolish the tea duty altogether. I quite concede that the present time, when we are levying new and increased taxes, is not the time to propose a reduction in any duty; but I do say that that would be only an act of justice, and one with which some future Chancellor of the Exchequer must deal. I think the House is entitled to some more information in regard to the proposal to raise thirty-five millions by way of loan. I remember in the autumn session the right hon. Member for West Monmouth declared that no proposal had ever been made to raise money without making some provision for its redemption. I was astonished that the Chancellor of the Exchequer made no such provision to-night. The right hon. Gentleman is depending, no doubt, on getting some of the money from the Transvaal. Still, I think it hardly fair to borrow thirty-five millions without making any provision at all for its liquidation, more especially when the Sinking Fund is to be suspended to the extent of four millions this year. I would also submit that the increase of our ordinary expenditure is so alarming that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have taken a still bolder course than he has proposed to the

House. In his Budget statement last year he stated that the increase in ordinary expenditure had been nineteen millions in four years, and that if this rate of increase is to continue Parliament and the country must make up their minds not only to a large increase in the existing taxes, but also to the discovery of new and productive sources of revenue. These were weighty utterances, and I should have hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would have come a little nearer to new proposals which some Chancellor of the Exchequer must deal with. The right hon. Gentleman has a new source of revenue lying ready to his hand; and if it is not tapped by him it will be by some future Chancellor of the Exchequer. It has already been indicated that town lands ought to be taxed. [Laughter.] I know that some hon. Members look upon that as a visionary proposal; but all proposals are visionary until they take shape and form; and while this country is slow to consider new methods of taxation I think the House will find that the country is in advance of the opinions of politicians on this matter, and that the people are ready, and will press, for a more equitable distribution of taxation. This is a matter with which Parliament will be forced to deal. We have allowed one class in the country to shift their obligations on to the shoulders of others. It was done by Sir Robert Peel in the case of the Corn Laws, and it was done by the Agricultural Rating Act. Here let me say there is another source from which the right hon. Gentleman might draw, because when a discussion took place in this House on the taxation of town lands, the First Lord of the Admiralty said that the Agricultural Rating Bill was only going to last for five years. I hope it will not be renewed. There again, therefore, the Chancellor of the Exchequer might look for a source of revenue. This question is one of enormous possibilities, of which it is almost impossible to foresee the end. We know that the land tax is levied on an old valuation of 1698, and that it is 4s. in the £ on that valuation; but if you were to put the tax on the true valuation of the land it would bring in about forty millions per annum. Now, there is a source of revenue which I am sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer will feel deeply indebted to Members on this side of the House for bringing before

him. A tax of 2s. in the £ on the true value of land will bring in an annual revenue of twenty millions. This is not the time to discuss the question of the taxation of land values—[HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear!"]—but I put that before the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I say that any gentleman who occupies the position which the right hon. Gentleman does, is in duty bound to look to all the available sources of revenue, especially when the country is met with a large demand on its taxable capacity. I had hoped that the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman would have been more suited to the temper of the nation, and that we should have had a bolder scheme of taxation adapted to the nation's need, and worthy of this great Empire.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the courageous and statesmanlike Budget which he has submitted to us this afternoon, and I entirely approve of what I consider his sound decision in asking the House to place their confidence in him, and to give him entire liberty in regard to the placing of the loan he proposes to raise. I believe the House and the country will approve of his desire to attract small investors to become fundholders of the State. We would all be glad if small investors were to become more of fund-holders and less of depositors. I wish to say a word on behalf of a class for whom we have not heard a word to-day; I mean the income tax payers. I do not wish to reduce the demand which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to make on the millionaires and the rich income tax payers. That is a class of the community which neither deserves, nor, I believe, asks for any sympathy. But there is no class of the community which in times of peace has to pay to the State a thirtieth of its income, and in times of war a twentieth of its income, like the income tax payers. I do not say that 1s. in the £ is a large income tax in this unhappy war period. I entirely approve of the distribution which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made of the taxes he desires to impose. In my opinion he has distributed them equitably on all classes of the community, and by all classes of the community will these taxes be cheerfully and contentedly paid. But I do hope that when my right

Mr. Cohen.

hon. friend occupies the position he now adorns in more happy—I cannot say more prosperous—times he will remember that he has now added 4d. in the £ to that tax.

*MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside): I wish to refer to the speech of the hon. Member for Devonport, who spoke with an assurance which I personally envied as to the opinion of the working classes in regard to this war, and the payment of the costs of this war. I do not deny his right to do so, but I think that his estimate of their zeal and enthusiasm to bear the burdens of this war is slightly exaggerated. To him everything seems the best in the best of all possible worlds. Speaking for himself, I think he was quite right to do so. I should probably do the same under similar circumstances. Still, the hon. Member, who had described the anxiety of the working classes to be taxed for the war, at once assured the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he had made one serious mistake in increasing the stamp duty on produce contracts. He said he felt sure, speaking from his own experience as a business man, that that source of revenue would nearly fail, because it was not absolutely necessary to make these contracts, and therefore he said, "You may be sure these business men will not pay the stamp duty." Now, I think that is an exalted form of patriotism that we all can appreciate. With all respect to the hon. Member, as the representative of commercial men—who, it seems, will dodge the duty on produce contracts for the love of their country—I regard him as better qualified to speak for them than to voice in a very general and confident manner the opinion of the working classes of the country. I am a little agitated about the peculiar things we get on this side of the House occasionally. But that is not all. The hon. Member, with the same confidence, expressed his delight that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had depended upon the regular revenue producer. There is financial reform for you! There is the old rut if you like! Let the broad back of labour and industry bear the regular burden of the revenue! Good sound Tory economics on the wrong side of the House! But is not this talk about bearing the equality of the burden of this war a little fallacious? I am not going to say for the moment whether the

benefits received from this war will be equal over all classes; but look for a moment as to whether the burden of taxation is equal under ordinary conditions. If it is taken for granted, as the hon. Member does, that the present system of taxation is so very fair and equal, then by no means allow the burden on the regular producer of revenue to be relieved. But I submit that times like these might be used by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for striking out on some new and permanent lines by which you might readjust the burden of taxation. I am no authority on finance, I need not say; but there are illustrious predecessors in the office—I say it sincerely—so worthily held by the right hon. Gentleman who have taken times of stress for proposing reforms which have lasted through the years of peace. There is not a man in this House who heard the able statement of the right hon. Gentleman with greater pleasure than I did. I also had read some of the fantastic proposals to which the right hon. Gentleman referred. But there are hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House who have remedies of their own which would interfere with the trade and industry of the country, and I therefore was very pleased that the right hon. Gentleman had not been led in his Budget proposals into these dangerous byeways. This question of equality of burden must be looked at a little closer. We have had for five years the great advantage of a Tory Government with a powerful majority. ["Hear, hear!" from the Government benches.] That is right; you would not be there if you did not agree with that. But I want to appeal to someone else besides hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. We have had five years of Tory Government with a great majority. Well, how many taxes have been remitted? We have been told over and over again that these have been five years of almost unexampled prosperity. [HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!] Exactly; our great trade has grown up by leaps and bounds; the condition of affairs has been good. Well, if we are not going to get a readjustment of taxation under these circumstances, when shall we get it? [AN HON. MEMBER: There is no taxation.] Sir, I am in the House of Commons, and not in a debating society in a public-house. I say we have had five years of unexampled prosperity, and, with the one exception of the miserable failure in the

case of the tobacco duty, not a single penny has been remitted in taxation. If we are not going to get remission of taxation and re-adjustment of burdens in times of prosperity, when are we going to get them? This is a very serious matter, but it is not half the case. Not only has there been no remission of taxation or a lightening of the burdens on the bent back of a single labourer in this London of yours, with his wages of £1 per week, but in order that the Government might convince the working man absolutely and completely that they had befooled him with their promises, they are actually giving doles to the richer classes of the community. A large part of these doles are going to the landowners, and the Tory Government have actually relieved taxation in the very places where they ought to have increased it. After all, this is a fitting conclusion to a Government like this. They began with promises to the working classes, and have ended with burdensome taxation on them. When I listened to the right hon. Gentleman's statement there was one consoling feature in it, on which we, on this side of the House, can congratulate ourselves. He admitted that the right hon. Member for West Monmouth by his great Finance Act had tapped a source of revenue that would never have been tapped by the hon. Gentleman opposite, and that there was this year an increase of £2,250,000 in the death duties. I venture to say that when people talk about laying the burden of taxation equally, let them get the revenue returns and see what proportion of the people do not come under the death duties at all. The great masses of the people have not a hundred pounds to leave when they die. These are the real Uitlanders. They have no land and no property, and although they love their country, it is not for what the country does for them. They have to be somewhere, and they are here. Yes; and it is that class which has ultimately to bear the burden of taxation. The capitalist can easily adapt himself to almost any situation; but the workman, and especially the poor workman not protected by his union, for whom I am particularly speaking, has out of his misery to bear the equal burden of a war which will not benefit him or his children one penny, and from which you will not get satisfaction or national honour. This is a capitalists' war; let them pay

Mr. Maddison.

for it, and then there might be equality of burden with equality of benefit. The hon. Member for North Islington said that with stable and just government in the Transvaal it might bear some of the cost of this war. Mr. Hays Hammond, a great authority, used precisely the same words. But what did he say would happen? The wages of the Kaffirs were to be reduced by half, and in a short time the wages of white labour would be reduced also. My class cannot own gold mines, they can only work in them, and that is the result. Now the hon. Member for Islington is going to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to remit half or the whole of the death duties in the cases of the officers who have died in South Africa. The chivalry of our officers has been worthy of their traditions, but is not this an index of the spirit of the times when hon. Members become enthusiastic about the widows of officers, but how about the widow of the Reservist, who may never have received more than a guinea in his life? You dragged him away to fight a war which he knew nothing about, and you give his widow a mere pittance. I am astonished that the hon. Member could make such a suggestion without coupling with it that some substantial assistance should be given to those who, of all the sufferers by this war, have to bear the heaviest burden. The taxation of this country is unequal and presses hardest where it can be the least easily borne, and when hon. Gentlemen talk of direct and indirect taxation they must compare taxation with the amount of income a man receives. A shilling to a dock labourer in London is more to him than many pounds to some Gentlemen in this House. The Transvaal committed the crime of making gold mines pay, but you not only make the poor of this country pay in bone and sinew but in money as well. It used to be a Liberal tradition that in taxation you should differentiate between necessities and luxuries, and in this respect I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have avoided what I must respectfully call a blot on his Budget. Tea is a necessity of the poor, and not alone of the poor, but their children. No man would like to see a child drink beer or whisky, but all are glad to see them drink tea, and by imposing a further tax upon tea the right hon. Gentleman has laid a great burden on the multitude of the children of the poor, who have to suffer silently,

having no voice in this House. If there is a division upon the proposed extra duty on tea, I shall vote against it.

MR. J. W. WILSON (Worcestershire, N.) desired to congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his Budget and the manner in which he had explained it to the House. The right hon. Gentleman had brought home the fact that war could not be made without taxation, and he had distributed that taxation in a very fair way. One of the best checks to the patriotism of the nation was that a war should be directly connected with the taxation of the country; but that fact had been almost forgotten by the present generation. In this particular case the nation as a whole was ready, if not willing, to respond to the call made upon it, and on that account it was exceedingly satisfactory to find that the right hon. Gentleman had seen his way to raise a great portion of the cost of this war by direct taxation, though no doubt in that direction he might have gone a great deal further. Speaking of the conduct of the colonies in regard to the war, the hon. Gentleman hoped that it would not be long before some Chancellor of the Exchequer, if not the right hon. Gentleman then occupying the position, would see his way to recognise the loyalty and patriotism of the colonies in some substantial manner, and suggested that colonial loans should be constituted trustees securities.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): My contribution to the debate shall be of the briefest possible character, chiefly because it seems to me that very few words are necessary to make clearly understood by the House the attitude the Irish Members take on this question. I listened with considerable interest to the speech of the hon. Member for Devonport, and, like the hon. Member who has spoken from this side of the House, I was rather amused at the confident way in which he spoke of the desire of the working classes to bear this additional taxation. Of course I have no right and no desire to speak in the name of the working classes of this country. I may be allowed, however, to say this: If I were an Englishman or an English Member who approved of this war I would give a hearty support to the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not believe, for myself, that the working classes of this country, speaking of them as a whole, do approve of this war. I may be entirely

wrong in that; it is only an expression of opinion, but it is some consolation to me, holding that opinion, to hear speeches like that delivered by the right hon. Gentleman near me, who, as far as I can make out, has more right and title to speak in the name of the working classes of this country than the hon. Member for Devonport. The position of Ireland in this matter is perfectly plain. We are asked to vote additional taxation in order to carry on a war which the overwhelming majority of the Irish people regard as immoral and unjust. And the position of Irish Members in this House would be ridiculous if on an occasion of this kind they, by every means in their power, did not protest against a Budget of this kind. That is the first position we take. We object to this additional load of taxation, because we are against the war, and on that broad ground we are bound by voice and vote to oppose this Budget. But, Sir, we take another ground of opposition altogether. The hon. Member who has spoken just now near me ridiculed the idea that the burden of taxation fell equally upon all classes in this country. If that be true of England, it is still more true of Ireland. What is the fact? Of the total taxation of Great Britain, only 48 per cent., as I recollect the figures, is indirect taxation, but in Ireland the proportion of indirect taxation is 78 per cent. Therefore, whenever you increase, as you propose by this Budget, the taxation in the way you now propose, you hit the poorer classes in Ireland to a larger extent than you hit the poorer classes in England. Some few years ago a Royal Commission in this country, composed of the most eminent economists and statisticians of the day, gave a verdict on the question of the taxation of Ireland to the effect that Ireland was overtaxed to the extent of nearly £3,000,000 a year. At that time the taxation of Ireland was only seven and a half millions. During the years that have passed, the taxation has steadily increased. This session during the debate on the Address an Amendment was moved raising this question, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his reply founded himself upon figures which showed that the total taxation of Ireland was something over £8,000,000 a year. This Budget proposes to increase the load of taxation in Ireland to over £9,000,000 a year, and it is no answer to us to say that the taxation of Great

Britain is at the same time proportionately increased, if it were true; because while during these years the prosperity of Great Britain has increased by leaps and bounds, admittedly the prosperity of Ireland and the population of Ireland have declined. No Englishman could have listened without a thrill of pride to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the enormous strides in industrial activity and prosperity made by this country during the last few years. By increasing the taxation on spirits you are perpetuating and increasing the injustice which originally was put upon Ireland in 1853 by the legislation of Mr. Gladstone. At that time, when Ireland was suffering from the effects of the famine, which had destroyed her prosperity and thinned her population, this legislation, at one fell swoop, doubled the taxation. From that day to this it has gone on from bad to worse; and to-day by putting this additional tax on Irish spirits you are perpetuating and increasing this injustice. The same thing applies to tea and to the increase in the tobacco duty. I think myself that the fairest way of providing the cost of this war, from an English point of view, is by the income tax, but what is the position in Ireland? It was first applied to Ireland in 1853 by Mr. Gladstone, who expressly stated that it was only to apply to Ireland for seven years, and that during those seven years she would get compensation for the imposition of the tax by the consolidated annuities. The consolidated annuities amounted to an annual payment by Ireland of £250,000 a year, and the first year the income tax was applied to Ireland she had to pay half a million. The income tax has never been taken off Ireland since, although something like 30 millions of money has been raised to pay that tax in the country, and yet there is now a proposal to increase it. It is true that the amount of increased income tax raised in Ireland by these proposals is only some £300,000 or £400,000 a year, which in itself is a proof of the poverty of the country, and the fact that this has been one of those sources of income which has gone on diminishing year after year is another proof of the declining prosperity of the country. For all these reasons, it is impossible for the Irish Members to take any other attitude than that of irreconcilable hostility to this Budget. I do not think it possible that

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any occasion could arise in this House which could mark in a more clear and definite way the position of Irish Members and the position which Ireland occupies in this country than that there are eighty-three or eighty-four Irish Members, out of a total of 100, separating themselves formally from the policy of the Empire, and from the policy of the Government of the Empire. The attitude of Ireland on occasions of this kind ought to teach a lesson to the Unionist politicians. I know their argument is that because we take this isolated position, therefore we ought not to be given these rights of self-government which exist in the colonies; but surely a more reasonable lesson for them to draw from this attitude which exists—I am not here to say I am glad it exists, I merely point to it—is to say that the policy which put an end to that state of disaffection and isolation in the colonies ought to be applied to Ireland, so as to bring an end to that state of affairs in that country. Our position is perfectly plain. I do not desire to prolong the debate. It is useless beating the air in this manner. We know that we are face to face with a majority of 150 on that side of the House, eked out by I don't know how many on this. We know we are in a small minority; we are a voice crying in the wilderness, and all we can do is to make that voice heard, make our protest, and make our position perfectly plain. There is nothing to be gained by simply prolonging the debate an hour or or two or three, and I content myself with the few words I have said, hoping that we may be able, at any rate, in the division lobby on each of these resolutions to explain and make clear to the country how completely Ireland is isolated away from the general sentiments with regard to this war, and how completely we desire to perpetuate the protest on the question of the over-taxation of Ireland. I beg to move this Amendment to the resolution, "To leave out the words 6d. and insert 4d."

*THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member moves that Amendment now, it will preclude the Chancellor of the Exchequer from replying to the points raised in the course of the debate.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said he had no desire to do such a thing. He would, therefore, withdraw the Amendment, and move it at another time.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH : I am obliged to the hon. Gentleman for withdrawing the Amendment. There are very few points on which I think I need trouble the Committee. In the first place, I thank the Committee generally for the manner in which my proposals have been received. Of course, I anticipated criticism in some quarters, and particularly that from the quarter for which the hon. Member for Waterford speaks there might be objection to certain of my proposals. But I am glad to find that there has been a general consensus of opinion that the principles upon which I have acted have been sound, and that apart from details, on which we never enter on the first evening of the Budget discussion, there is, generally speaking, approval of my scheme of new taxation. I will not attempt to enter upon the very large question to which the closing remarks of the hon. Member for Waterford referred. The attitude of Ireland towards the rest of the United Kingdom is unquestionably a very important and a very difficult subject, and it raises issues which have very often occupied the attention of Parliament, and very possibly will occupy it again. But I do not think it is quite appropriate to an ordinary debate upon the introduction of the Budget. The hon. Member objects to my proposals of taxation, first on the ground that he and his friends are against the war. That is, of course, a very fair ground of objection to any taxation which is avowedly intended for the purpose of carrying on the war; but at the same time the hon. Member will excuse me if I do not enter at length into his arguments, because there is obviously an irreconcilable difference of opinion between us on the subject. Then he went on to say, as a further objection to my proposals, that they were unequal to Ireland because of the great increase of the prosperity of England and the great decrease in the prosperity of Ireland. There will be another opportunity, I understand, upon which we can argue that question; but it has never been proved, at any rate to my satisfaction, that there is such a thing as a decrease of prosperity in Ireland.

MR. JOHN REDMOND : Relative decrease.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH : Ah, yes; but I believe the prosperity of Ireland has largely increased in recent years, and

when the proper time comes I think I shall be able to show some facts, and possibly some statistics, in proof of that assertion. I do not quite see why, for instance, such thriving industries as exist in Belfast and its neighbourhood, or as exist in Guinness's Brewery and in Jameson's Distillery in Dublin, should be exempted from the same income tax which is levied in England. That seems to me to be a point raised by the hon. Member for which there is no logical argument whatever. I admit that, as a whole, Ireland is not represented by industries of this kind. As a whole, Ireland is an agricultural country, but there are large parts of England, and there are larger parts of Scotland, which are purely agricultural also, and I know parts of Scotland and the Western Islands myself which, I believe, are infinitely poorer than any part of Ireland. Really this question is one between the industrial, so to speak, part of the country and the agricultural part of the country, much more than between Ireland and England and Ireland and Scotland, or anything of that kind. However, I think the hon. Member will excuse me if I do not enter further into this matter to-night. I have noted two points affecting Ireland which have been mentioned in the course of the debate this evening into which I will very gladly inquire. The hon. Member for North Louth asked me whether I would, in increasing the duty on tobacco, consider the removal of any restriction which would prevent the growing of tobacco in Ireland. There is nothing I should be more glad to do than to encourage the growth of tobacco in Ireland, and I can promise the hon. Member that if this matter is brought before me, as I hope it will be brought before me, by the Irish Board of Agriculture, I will most readily have that matter thoroughly examined, and if anything can be done, and I daresay possibly something may be done, consistently with proper regard to the revenue from tobacco, to remove any restriction which would prevent the growing of tobacco in Ireland, I shall very gladly try to deal with the matter. The hon. Member for West Clare, who is interested in an important industry in Dublin, complained bitterly, as I understand, of the unfair competition of foreign spirits with Irish spirits. I am no lover of foreign spirits at all. I believe that, as a rule, they are comparatively bad, and I am glad to think that last year there was

a considerable decrease in their importation into this country. But this year the importation has largely increased again. The hon. Member complains that they come into unfair competition by fraudulent misrepresentation with spirits distilled in the United Kingdom. If the hon. Member will be good enough to have the details of his complaint placed before me, I will undertake to inquire into it and see whether anything can be done. The hon. Member for Leicester dealt with the duties on tobacco and tea, and pressed me for some relaxation of the duty on the cheaper kinds of tobacco and tea, and some increase of the duty upon the dearer kinds of tobacco and tea. That would be practically, I suspect, a return to the old system of *ad valorem* duties. I am afraid the system of *ad valorem* duties with regard to articles of this kind has been tried thoroughly, and has been found impracticable and unworkable. There are distinctions, of course, in the duty on different kinds of tobacco, but whether it be possible to alter the tariff so as to extend those distinctions or to regulate the matter in any way which shall, without causing the old evils to arise again, give effect to the hon. Member's wish that the duty on tobacco, which certainly is extremely heavy on the cheaper kinds, shall to some extent vary with the value of the article, is a matter on which I am very doubtful. I do not at all expect that it will be possible to do anything in this Budget, because it will require very great consideration and consultation with the trade. But I think the present system may be capable of some alteration, and I shall be glad, at any rate, to see if anything can be done. With tea, I think it would be more difficult. I am speaking in the presence of hon. Members who understand the tea trade much better than I do, but I very much doubt whether it would be possible to introduce anything like *ad valorem* duties with regard to tea. I know there is a great difference in the value of the dearer and cheaper kinds of tea, but, as I said, I am afraid such a system has been thoroughly tried before and found wanting, and it would not do to return to it. The hon. Member for East Edinburgh, who has evidently given much study to financial subjects, asked me whether I regretted the reduction of the fixed debt charge by £2,000,000 last year. No, Sir, I am entirely

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unrepentant. Suppose I had not carried that reduction, two millions more would have been expended in the reduction of the National Debt. But, as a matter of fact, the two millions were expended in paying the expenses of the war. When we are at war it is pretty well time to cease paying off old debts, and so, for the same reasons as those for which I now propose a temporary suspension of the Sinking Fund for the year, I am bound to say I am glad that this two millions went towards the expenses of the war. The hon. Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool criticises not very favourably my proposals with regard to tobacco. I do not gather that my hon. friend suggested that I could have made any other proposals than those which I have made. My hon. friend, I think, said he was well acquainted with the tobacco trade, and that, although the alteration I propose is considerable, yet it is not divisible among the consumers, although I should have thought 4d. per lb. is divisible among small fractions of a lb. I do not know whether my hon. friend is in the House, but if he is I should like to know whether he wishes me to consider the question of adding 6d. instead of 4d. to tobacco. If I receive any representations on the subject from those interested in the industry, and if it can be shown to me that the change would be better, not only in the interest of the trade, but in the interest of the consumer, of course I should be quite ready to adopt the alteration. As it is, I think I must agree with the remark that the change, as it had to be made, is equitable. A good many Members on both sides of the House in the course of the debate have referred to the future imposition of the cost of the war on the Transvaal. Well, Sir, I have already stated, in October last, my view on the subject as plainly as I think it could be stated in the existing state of affairs. Our troops are not in the Transvaal. We hope for an early and successful conclusion of the war, and the Committee may be quite certain that, when the war is brought to that conclusion, we shall not forget—and least of all I shall not forget—anything that has been said as to the relief of the taxpayers of this country, as I think they ought to be relieved of at least a considerable portion of the cost of the war. [An Hon. Member: The whole of it.] Well, if possible, the whole of it. I think I

cannot add anything at this moment to what I have said on that subject. I think it would be quite premature to do what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth has suggested, and to state the kind of security we should take for the mode in which the payment should be made. All that will have to be settled when the proper time comes, and I can only say now that it shall not escape our attention. I think now I have alluded to the principal points which seem to me to require attention, and I have only to express the hope that the Committee will be good enough to do what is invariably done on these occasions, on the first night of the Budget—namely, to pass the resolutions in regard to the indirect taxation of dutiable subjects which will come into force to-morrow morning, and I shall be happy to arrange for the resumption of the debate, which could probably be best done by putting down the income tax resolution.

MR. KEARLEY: Will you kindly explain what is meant by £1,900,000 arrears of the income tax?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: There are always considerable arrears in the quarter between 1st April and 1st July, and this £1,900,000 will be the arrears of the additional 4d. for 1900-1901. The taxation be-

longs really to 1900-1901. I don't know whether I might also ask the Committee to pass the resolution this evening with regard to the loan. If there is no objection to that it would be more convenient, because it would enable me to make the necessary arrangements in a matter that should not be long delayed. I am in the hands of the Committee.

MR. LABOUCHERE: If my hon. friend (Mr. J. Redmond) proposes to move a reduction from sixpence to fourpence with regard to the tea duty, I shall not be able to support the Amendment. Under these circumstances I propose, Sir, that after the Amendment of my hon. friend has been negatived you should put the substantive resolution. In that case I should not vote with my hon. friend, but I should subsequently vote upon the resolution itself.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I will move the reduction.

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the words ‘six pence,’ and insert the words ‘four pence.’”—(Mr. John Redmond.)

Question put, “That the words ‘six pence’ stand part of the Question.”

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 209; Noes, 60. (Division List No. 52.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.	Cohen, Benjamin Louis	Galloway, William Johnson
Anson, Sir William Reynell	Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse	Gedge, Sydney
Archdale, Edward Mervyn	Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready	Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (C. of Lond
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.	Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole	Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John	Cook, Fred Lucas (Lambeth)	Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)	Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)	Goldsworthy, Major-General
Banbury, Frederick George	Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)	Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. Smith (Hunts)	Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.	Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Bartley, George C. T.	Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.	Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. Geo's)
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)	Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge	Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Beach, Rt. Hn. W. W. B. (Hants)	Cubitt, Hon. Henry	Goulding, Edward Alfred
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.	Curzon, Viscount	Graham, Henry Robert
Beckett, Ernest William	Dalkeith, Earl of	Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Bethell, Commander	Denny, Colonel	Green, Walford D. (Wedn'sb'ry)
Blundell, Colonel Henry	Dorington, Sir John Edward	Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme	Doughty, George	Gretton, John
Bousfield, William Robert	Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-	Greville, Hon. Ronald
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John	Dunn, Sir William	Gull, Sir Cameron
Bullard, Sir Harry	Evershed, Sydney	Haldane, Richard Burdon
Butcher, John George	Faber, George Denison	Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)	Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward	Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Carlile, William Walter	Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)	Hanson, Sir Reginald
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)	Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man.)	Hardy, Laurence
Cayzer, Sir Charles William	Finch, George H.	Heaton, John Henniker
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)	Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne	Henderson, Alexander
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)	Firbank, Joseph Thomas	Hoare, Ed. Brodie (Hampstead)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)	Fisher, William Haye	Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)	Flannery, Sir Fortescue	Hobhouse, Henry
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry	Flower, Ernest	Howard, Joseph
Charrington, Spencer	Forster, Henry William	Howell, William Tudor
Chelsea, Viscount	Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)	Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
Clare, Octavius Leigh	Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)	Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Coghill, Douglas Harry	Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry	Hudson, George Bickersteth

Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hon. Sir U.
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
 Keswick, William
 Knowles, Lees
 Lafone, Alfred
 Lawrence, Sir E. D. (Cornwall)
 Lawrence, W. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. Wm. Ed. H.
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Aberdeen)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Llewellyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea)
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Macdure, Sir John William
 McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 McArthur, Wm. (Cornwall)
 McIver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
 McKillop, James
 Malcolm, Ian
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Middlemore, John T.
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip

Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
 More, R. J. (Shropshire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, Walter
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. Graham (Bute)
 Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newdigate, Francis Alex.
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsey
 Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
 Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
 Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
 Penn, John
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs., Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlepool)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
 Round, James
 Russell, T. W. (Tyne)
 Rutherford, John

Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, James Parker (Lanark)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Usborne, Thomas
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
 Williams, Joseph Powell (Birm.)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestershire, N.)
 Wilson-Todd, W. H. (York)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
 William Walrond and Mr.
 Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
 Billson, Alfred
 Blake, Edward
 Broadhurst, Henry
 Caldwell, James
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Crilly, Daniel
 Crombie, John William
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Dewar, Arthur
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Engledew, Charles John
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
 Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
 Holland, William Henry
 Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
 Jameson, Major J. Eustace

Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
 Kilbride, Denis
 Langley, Batty
 Lawson, Sir W. (Cumb'land)
 Leng, Sir John
 Lough, Thomas
 Macaleese, Daniel
 MacDonnell, Dr. MA (Queen's C)
 McCrae, George
 McDermott, Patrick
 McLaren, Charles Benjamin
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Molloy, Bernard Charles
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 O'Malley, William
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Redmond, William (Clare)
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Runciman, Walter
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Souttar, Robinson
 Steadman, William Charles
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (H'drs'rd)
 TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Captain Donelan and Mr.
 Maddison.

Main Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 223 ; Noes, 48. (Division List No. 53.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r.)
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. Smith (Hunts)
 Bartley, George, C. T.

Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Beach, Rt. Hon. W. W. B. (Hants)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Beckett, Ernest William
 Bethell, Commander
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
 Bousfield, William Robert
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John

Bullard, Sir Harry
 Butcher, John George
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
 Carlile, William Walter
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh)
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)

Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm)
 Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc.)
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Harrington, Spencer
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Clare, Octavius Leigh
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir J. C. Ready
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
 Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgw)
 Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
 Cotton-Jodrell, Col. E. T. D.
 Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
 Crombie, John William
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Curzon, Viscount

Dalkeith, Earl of
 Denny, Colonel
 Dewar, Arthur
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Doughty, George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Dunn, Sir William

Evershed, Sydney

Faber, George Denison
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Fergusson, Rt. H. Sir J. (Man.)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Firbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Flower, Ernest
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry

Galloway, William Johnson
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gordon, Sir Augustus Frederick
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. Geo.'s)
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Green, W. D. (Widnesbury)
 Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
 Gretton, John
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
 Gull, Sir Cameron

Haldane, Richard Burdon
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Rbt. Wm.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hardy, Laurence
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hoare, Ed. Brodie (Hampstead)
 Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)

Hobhouse, Henry
 Holland, William Henry
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-

Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)

Kay-Shuttleworth Rt. Hn. Sir U.
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Henry
 Knowles, Lees

Lafone, Alfred
 Langley, Batty
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning- (Corn)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lecky, Rt. Hn. William Ed. H.
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Sw'nsea)
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liv'pool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman

Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Maclure, Sir John William
 McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 McArthur, William (Cornwall)
 McCrae, George
 McIver, Sir Lewis (Edin. W.)
 McKillop, James
 McLaren, Charles Benjamin
 Malcolm, Ian
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Montagu, Hon. J. S. (Hants.)
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropsh.)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, Walter
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)

Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicol, Donald Ninian

Oldroyd, Mark
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay

Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
 Palmer, Geo. Wm. (Reading)
 Pease, H. Pike (Darlington)
 Penn, John
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert

Pilkington, R. (Lancs., Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymman, Ernest George
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy

Quilter, Sir Cuthbert

Rankin, Sir James
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
 Richardson, Sir Thos. (Hartlep'l)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Round, James
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley

Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Rnfwr.)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, James P. (Lanark.)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stewart, Sir M. J. M. Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier

Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Tollenache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Tritton, Charles Ernest

Usborne, Thomas

Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunt.)
 Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh., N.)
 Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudders.)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wryvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Cork, N.E.)
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
 Billson, Alfred
 Blake, Edward
 Caldwell, James
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Crilly, Daniel
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Engledew, Charles John
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
 Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
 Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
 Jameson, Major J. Eustace

Kilbride, Denis
 Lawson, Sir W. (Cun.berland)
 Leng, Sir John
 Macaleese, Daniel
 MacDonnell, Dr. M. (Queen's C)
 M'Dermott, Patrick
 Maddison, Fred.
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Molloy, Bernard Charles
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 O'Malley, William
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Redmond, William (Clare)
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Runciman, Walter
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Souttar, Robinson
 Steadman, William Charles
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns
 Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Labouchere and Mr.
 Broadhurst.

Resolved, That in lieu of the duty of customs now payable on tea, there shall be charged, levied, and paid on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, the following duty (that is to say)—

	£	s.	d.
Tea the pound	0	0	6

TOBACCO.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That in addition to the duties of customs now payable on tobacco imported into Great Britain or Ireland, there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
Tobacco, manufactured, namely:—			
Cigars the pound	0	0	6
Cavendish or negro-head } the pound	0	0	6
Cavendish or negro-head, manufactured in bond } the pound	0	0	5
Other manufactured tobacco } the pound	0	0	5
Snuff containing more than thirteen pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof } the pound	0	0	5
Snuff not containing more than thirteen pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof } the pound	0	0	6

Tobacco, unmanufactured, namely:—

	£	s.	d.
Containing ten pounds or more of moisture in every hundred pounds weight thereof } the pound	0	0	4
Containing less than ten pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof } the pound	0	0	4

—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to move to leave out "five-pence" and insert "one penny" in the clause relating to tobacco manufactured in bond. I do not object at all to that part of the right hon. Gentleman's resolution dealing with tobacco which proposes to put a tax of 6d. on imported foreign cigars. That appears to me to be a luxury which, I think, those who indulge in can very well afford to pay for. I am sorry also that the right hon. Gentleman has not pursued more generally the policy of taxation of luxuries. In dealing with this resolution I do not suppose I would be quite in order to refer to it, but I must say that when spirits, and more particularly beer, the drink of the people of this country, is taxed, and we find absolutely not a single penny of additional taxation is put on foreign wines, it is a very extraordinary thing. I think it would be only a fair and reasonable provision that some tax should be put on foreign wines, which are only taken by

the wealthier classes. Tobacco is perhaps the only luxury which is indulged in by the masses of the people. Tobacco is the very last article of consumption which ought to have been subjected to a tax of this kind. I do not go into the causes which have rendered this fresh taxation necessary, but I do think that it is a hard thing upon the masses of this enormously wealthy country, when millions upon millions have to be raised for the purpose of defraying the cost of a war in which I do not believe the working people of the country take so much interest as is imagined, that a tax should be put upon tobacco. Why does not the right hon. Gentleman put a heavier tax than he proposes to put on imported foreign cigars? Gentlemen who can afford to pay 1s., 1s. 6d., and 2s. for a cigar which takes ten minutes to smoke can very well afford to pay additional taxation; but it is rather hard upon a working man who can ill spare very often a few pence to buy half an ounce of shag to find that he is called upon to bear a large share of the taxation of this war. As the hon. Member for Devonport pointed out—and it was the only thing he said with which I concurred—this additional taxation will be made to come upon the consumer. Some time ago, when the tax upon tobacco was remitted to some extent, the whole of that went to the retailer and

not to the consumer. No one discovered any decrease in the price of tobacco over the counter at the time the tax was taken off. In regard to the paying of the expense of the war, I wish to remind the House that when the war broke out the Government of the Republic, from President Kruger down to the humblest official, all reduced their salaries to one-seventh of what they were. I think it would be a noble spectacle to the masses of the people of this country, who are called upon to pay additional taxation on tea and tobacco, if a heroic and patriotic sacrifice were made by Her Majesty's Government in the same manner, each of whom could get on very well until this war is over with £500 instead of £5,000. However, I suppose that is too much to expect, and all I can do is to enter my protest against this increase in the tax on tobacco.

Amendment proposed—

"In lines 9 and 10 (cavendish or negrohead, manufactured in bond, the pound), to leave out the words 'five pence,' and insert the words 'one penny.'"—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question put, "That the words 'five pence' stand part of the Question."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 247 ; Noes, 30. (Division List No. 54.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Barnard, Frederick George
Barnard, H. Smith (Hunt)
Barnard, George C. T.
Barnard, Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Barnard, W. W. B. (Hants)
Barnard, Wentworth C. B.
Barnard, Ernest William
Barnard, Sir

Carlile, William Walter
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir J. Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crombie, John William
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cunliffe, Viscount
Cunliffe, Earl of
Cunliffe, Colonel

Dewar, Arthur
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Eumott, Alfred
Evershed, Sydney
Faber, George Denison
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man.)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Godson, Sir Augustus F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General

Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. Geo's)
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Green, Walford D. (Weds'sb'ry)
 Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
 Gretton, John
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
 Haldane, Richard Burdon
 Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
 Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
 Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
 Hobhouse, Henry
 Holland, William Henry
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hozier, Hon. J. Henry Cecil
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. G.
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
 Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Henry
 Knowles, Lees
 Lafone, Alfred
 Langley, Batty
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning. (Corn)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. William E. H.
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Leng, Sir John
 Llewellyn, Sir Dillwyn. (Sw'sea)
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William

Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonna, John Cumming
 Maclure, Sir John William
 M'Arthur, C. (Liverpool)
 M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
 M'Crae, George
 M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
 M'Killop, James
 Malcolm, Ian
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
 More, R. J. (Shropshire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, Walter
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
 Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newdigate Francis Alexander
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
 Palmer, George W. (Reading)
 Pease, H. Pike (Darlington)
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Penn, John
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Phillipotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lanes Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edw.
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
 Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlepl)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.

Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Round, James
 Runciman, Walter
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarksh.)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Souttar, Robinson
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thoraton, Percy M.
 Tollenache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Usborne, Thomas
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunt'n)
 Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, Joseph Powell. (Birm)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worce'ssh. N.)
 Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudderd)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
 Blake, Edward
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Crilly, Daniel
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Doogan, P. C.
 Engledew, Charles John
 Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis

Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
 Jameson, Major J. Eustace
 Kilbride, Denis
 Labouchere, Henry
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
 Macaleese, Daniel
 MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qn's. C.)
 M'Dermott, Patrick
 M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
 Molloy, Bernard Charles
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)

O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 O'Malley, William
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Redmond, William (Clare)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns
 Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
 TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Captain Donelan and Mr.
 Patrick O'Brien.

Main Question again proposed.

Another Amendment proposed—

"In line 24 (tobacco unmanufactured, etc., containing less than ten pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof), to

leave out the words 'four pence,' and insert the words 'one penny.'—(*Mr. Patrick O'Brien.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'four pence' stand part of the Question."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That in addition to the duties of Customs now payable on tobacco imported into Great Britain or Ireland, there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
Tobacco, manufactured, viz. :—			
Cigars the pound	0	0	6
Cavendish or negro head the pound	0	0	6
Cavendish or negro head, manufactured in bond the pound	0	0	5
Other manufactured Tobacco the pound	0	0	5
Snuff containing more than thirteen pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof ... the pound	0	0	5
Snuff not containing more than thirteen pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof ... the pound	0	0	6
Tobacco, unmanufactured, viz. :—			
Containing ten pounds or more of moisture in every hundred pounds weight thereof ... the pound	0	0	4
Containing less than ten pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof ... the pound	0	0	4

SPIRITS.—EXCISE.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That in addition to the duty of excise now payable for every gallon computed at proof of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom there shall on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duty (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
For every gallon of spirits computed at proof	0	0	6

and so in proportion for any less quantity."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

*MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): In moving that the additional duty should be 4d. instead of 6d., some remarks fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he was speaking on this subject, and also from the hon. Member for Northampton, which are not correct. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that large industries like Guinness and the Dublin Distillers Company, Limited, could well bear additional taxation. That is not so, so far as the Dublin Distillers Company, Limited, is concerned. The whisky produced by us is made from barley grown in Ireland, and when they added to the whisky tax, they placed a tax on the agricultural industry of the country. The hon. Member for Northampton stated that tea was more heavily taxed than spirits. He forgets altogether that one pound of tea would make a good many gallons, so that very far from the tea paying twenty times more than whisky, as a matter of fact, tea would pay twenty times less than whisky, even with the present taxation.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'six pence,' and insert the words 'four pence.'—(*Major Jameson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'six pence' stand part of the Question."

MR. T. M. HEALY recognised that some approach had been made to the Irish Members by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as regarded the removal of the tobacco restrictions. He had always been of opinion that in dealing with the English, though a peculiar people, there was more to be got out of them by a reasonable than an unreasonable attitude. He would remind his hon. friend (Major Jameson) that while they might take a division by way of registering their protest, the stages of the Bill would afford opportunities for discussion. The hon. Member remembered the admirable speeches made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1885 against the increase of the whisky duty, and with the right hon. Gentleman's powerful assistance they turned out the Government of the day and brought in a Home Rule Government, in fact, two Home Rule Governments, but neither of them succeeded.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 235; Noes, 22. (Division List No. 55.)

AYES.

- Acland-Hood, Capt Sir Alex. F.
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold, Alfred
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. Smith (Hts)
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Beach, Rt. Hon. W. W. B. (Hants)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Beckett, Ernest William
 Bethell, Commander
 Blownaggree, Sir M. M.
 Billson, Alfred
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
 Bousfield, William Robert
 Brodric, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brymer, William Ernest
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
 Carlile, William Walter
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbyshire)
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, J. Austen (Wor.)
 Charrington, Spencer
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Clare, Octavius Leigh
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
 Colston, Chas. E. H. Athole
 Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
 Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Herefd)
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Cornwallis, Fienes Stan. W.
 Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Ed. T. D.
 Crombie, John William
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Denny, Colonel
 Dewar, Arthur
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Dorrington, Sir John Edward
 Doughty, George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Dunn, Sir William
 Emmott, Alfred
 Evershed, Sydney
 Faber, George Denison
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Ferguson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Man.)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Firbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Flower, Ernest
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (C. of Lond.)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
 Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St George's)
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury)
 Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
 Gretton, John
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
 Haldane, Richard Burdon
 Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
 Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
 Hobhouse, Henry
 Holland, William Henry
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hozier, Hon. J. H. C.
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Jones, William (Carnarvons.)
 Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Henry
 Knowles, Lees
 Lafone, Alfred
 Langley, Batty
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn.)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'd)
 Lecky, Rt. Hn. William E. H.
 Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Leng, Sir John
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Sw'n's a)
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (L'pool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Maclure, Sir John William
 M'Arthur, Chas. (Liverpool)
 M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
 M'Crae, George
 M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W)
 M'Killop, James
 M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
 Malcolm, Ian
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn W. F.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Middelmore, J. Throgmorton
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, Walter
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
 Palmer, Geo. Wm. (Reading)
 Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Penn, John
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Phillipotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
 Richardson, Sir T. (Hartle'pl)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matt. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
 Robertson, Herb. (Hackney)
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
 Round, James
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Souttar, Robinson
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, W. M. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philip
 Usborne, Thomas
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Tau't'n)
 Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notte)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Williams, Joseph Powell (Birm)

Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh., N.)

Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. P. (Bath)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'field)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Blake, Edward
Crilly, Daniel
Doogan, P. C.
Engledew, Charles John
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Healy, T. M. (N. Louth)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace

Kilbride, Denis
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qu'n's C)
McDermott, Patrick
Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Malley, William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh

Redmond, J. E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Captain Donelan and Mr.
Patrick O'Brien.

Main Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 231; Noes, 20. (Division List No. 56.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. S. (tunts)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, Rt. Hon. W. W. B. (Hants)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Billson, Alfred
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Bullard, Sir Harry
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbys.)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamblain, Rt. Hn J (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelmsa, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John C. Ready
Colton, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Herefd)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis, Fienne Stanley W.
Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
Crombie, John William
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalziel, James Henry
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George

Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Emmott, Alfred
Evershed, Sydney
Faber, George Denison
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. M. (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manch'r)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firkbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. Geo.'s)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wendnesb'ry)
Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hambury, Rt. Hon. R. Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Harley, Laurence
Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Holland, William Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, Hon. James Hy. Cecil
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick

Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Jones William (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Langley, Batty
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning- (Corn)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lawson Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leng, Sir John
Llewelyn Sir Dillwyn (Swansea)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdonald, John Cumming
Maclure, Sir John William
McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
McArthur, William (Cornwall)
McCrae, George
McIver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
McKillop, James
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Malcolm, Ian
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Middlemore, John T.
Mildred, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
More, R. J. (Shropshire)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Oldroyd, Mark
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Palmer, George W. (Reading)
Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)

Penn, John
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lanes Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, J. (Durham S.E.)
 Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlepool)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. T.
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
 Round, James
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)

Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, James P. (Lanarks.)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Souttar, Robinson
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.

Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, W. E. Murray
 Osborne, Thomas
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Welby, Sir C. G. E. (Notts.)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
 Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcester. N.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
 Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
 TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Crilly, Daniel
 Doogan, P. C.
 Engledew, Charles John
 Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
 Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
 Jameson, Major J. Eustace

Kilbride, Denis
 Macaleese, Daniel
 MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qn's Co.)
 M'Dermott, Patrick
 Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 O'Malley, William
 Power, Patrick Joseph

Redmond, J. E. (Waterford)
 Redmond, William (Clare)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Captain Donelan and Mr.
 Patrick O'Brien.

Resolved, That in addition to the duty of excise now payable for every gallon computed at proof of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duty (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
For every gallon of spirits com- puted at proof	0	0	6

and so on in proportion for any less quantity.

SPIRITS.—CUSTOMS.

4. Resolved, That, in addition to the duties of customs now payable on spirits imported into Great Britain or Ireland, there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the duties following (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
For every gallon of spirits computed at proof, of spirits of any descrip- tion, except perfumed spirits	0	0	6
For every gallon of perfumed spirits	0	0	10
For every gallon of liqueurs, cordials, mixtures, and other preparations entered in such a manner as to indicate that the strength is not to be tested	0	0	8

And the duties of customs on the articles hereafter mentioned, being articles in which spirit is contained or in the manu-

facture of which spirit is used, shall be proportionately increased, and shall be as follows:—

		£	s.	d.
Chloral hydrate...	the pound	0	1	4
Chloroform	the pound	0	3	3
Collodion...	the gallon	1	6	3
Ether acetic	the pound	0	1	11
Ether butyric	the gallon	0	16	5
Ether sulphuric...	the gallon	1	7	5
Ethyl, iodide of...	the gallon	0	14	3
Ethyl bromide	the pound	0	1	1
Ethyl chloride	the gallon	0	16	5

—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

BEER.—EXCISE.

5. Motion made, and Question put, "That in addition to the duty of excise now payable in respect of beer brewed in the United Kingdom there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duty (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
For every thirty-six gal- lons of worts of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-five degrees the duty of	0	1	0

and so on in proportion for any difference in quantity or gravity.—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 215 ;
 Noes, 18. (Division List No. 57.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold, Alfred
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. Smith- (Hunts)
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Beach, Rt. Hon. W. W. B. (Hants.)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Beckett, Ernest William
 Bethell, Commander
 Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
 Billson, Alfred
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bonser, Henry Cosmo Orme
 Bousfield, William Robert
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brymer, William Ernest
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
 Carlile, William Walter
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Charrington, Spencer
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Clare, Octavius Leigh
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
 Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Her'fd)
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Cornwallia, Piennes Stanley W.
 Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Denny, Colonel
 Dewar, Arthur
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Doughty, George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Dunn, Sir William
 Evershed, Sydney
 Faber, George Denison
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
 Fergusson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man.)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Firbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Flower, Ernest
 Foster, Henry William
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.

Godson, Sir A. Frederick
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. George's)
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Green, W. D. (Wednesbury)
 Gretton, John
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
 Haldane, Richard Burdon
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
 Hobhouse, Henry
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Henry
 Knowles, Lees
 Lafone, Alfred
 Langley, Batty
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning- (Corn)
 Lawrence, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Leng, Sir John
 Llewellyn, Sir D. (Swansea)
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Maclure, Sir John William
 MacArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 McCrae, George
 McIver, Sir Lewis (Edin. W.)
 McKillop, James
 McLaren, Charles Benjamin
 Malcolm, Ian
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, Walter
 Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Gra'm (Bute)

Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
 Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
 Pease, H. Pike (Darlington)
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Penn, John
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Rich. (Lanes N'ton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
 Prynne-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
 Richardson, Sir Thos. (Hartlep'l)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
 Round, James
 Russell, T. W. (Tyronce)
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Samuel, J. (Sto'kton-on-Tees)
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, James Parker (Lanark)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Soutar, Robinson
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, W. E. Murray
 Usborne, Thomas
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Welby, Sir C. G. E. (Notts.)
 Wentworth, B. C. Vernon-
 Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh., N.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. ER (Bath)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES:—
 Sir William Walrand and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Crilly, Daniel
Doogan, P. C.
Engledew, Charles John
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Healy, Timothy M. (N.Louth)

Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Kilbride, Denis
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, DrMA. (Queen's C)
McDermott, Patrick
O'Malley, William
Power, Patrick Joseph

Redmond John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Captain Donelan and Mr.
Patrick O'Brien.

Resolved, That in addition to the duty of excise now payable in respect of beer brewed in the United Kingdom there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duty (that is to say):—

£ s. d.

Forevery thirty-six gallons
of worts of a specific
gravity of one thousand
and fifty-five degrees
the duty of ... 0 1 0

and so on in proportion for
any difference in quantity or
gravity.

BEER.—CUSTOMS.

6. Resolved, That in addition to the duties of customs now payable on beer imported into Great Britain or Ireland there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say):—

In the case of beer called or similar to mum, spruce, black beer, or Berlin white beer or other preparations whether fermented or not fermented of a similar character—

For every thirty-six gal- £ s. d.
lons where the worts
thereof are or were
before fermentation of a
specific gravity—

Not exceeding one
thousand two hun-
dred and fifteen
degrees, a duty of 0 4 0

Exceeding one thou-
sand two hundred
and fifteen degrees,
a duty of... 0 4 8

In the case of every de-
scription of beer other than
that above specified —

For every thirty-six
gallons where the
worts thereof were

before fermentation
of a specific gravity
of one thousand and
fifty-five degrees, a
duty of ... 0 1 0

and so in proportion for any difference in
gravity.—(Mr. Chancellor of the Ex-
chequer.)

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

7. Resolved, That it is expedient to
prolong the term of certain annuities,
and amend the law relating to the
National Debt, the Customs, and the
Inland Revenue.—(Mr. Chancellor of the
Exchequer.)

WAR LOAN.

8. Motion made, and Question pro-
posed, “(1) That, towards making good
the supply granted to Her Majesty for
the service of the years ending on the
31st day of March, nineteen hundred, and
the 31st day of March, nineteen hundred
and one, sums not exceeding thirty-five
million pounds be raised by either or
both of the following methods:—

(a) By means of the creation of stock
or bonds to be redeemed within a
period not exceeding ten years,
and bearing interest at a rate to
be fixed by the Treasury; or

(b) By means of the issue of Trea-
sury Bills;

and that the principal and the interest on
any money so raised be charged on the
Consolidated Fund;

(2) That all expenses incurred in co-
nection with raising the said sums, in-
cluding any additional remuneration to
the banks of England and Ireland, be
charged on the Consolidated Fund.”—
(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow;
Committee to sit again to-morrow.

It being after One of the Clock, Mr.
Speaker adjourned the House without
Question put.

Adjourned at half after
One of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 6th March, 1900.

Francis John Earl of Wharnccliffe and Viscount Carlton having succeeded to those dignities on the death of his uncle Edward Montagu Stuart Granville Earl of Wharnccliffe, Viscount Carlton, etc., by virtue of a special remainder in a patent dated 15th January, 1876—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

A petition of Messrs. Sharpe, Parker, Pritchards, Barham, and Lawford, of 9, Bridge Street, Westminster, parliamentary agents, praying for leave to present a petition of Tipton Urban District Council, praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill, although the time limited by Standing Order No. 92 for presenting such petition has expired; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and Standing Order No. 92 to be considered on Thursday next in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said petition.

CARDIFF CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

MUIRKIRK, MAUCHLINE, AND DALLMELLINGTON RAILWAYS (ABANDONMENT) BILL [H.L.].

WHITECHAPEL AND BOW RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

CHRISTCHURCH, BOURNEMOUTH, AND WINTON TRAMWAYS BILL.

ST. DAVID'S RAILWAY (ABANDONMENT) BILL.

DUBLIN ELECTRIC LIGHTING BILL.

BLACKPOOL, ST. ANNE'S, AND LYTHAM TRAMWAYS BILL.

Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next.

MILFORD DOCKS BILL [H.L.].

Committed.

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CALEDONIAN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

DEARNE VALLEY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection

UNIVERSAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [H.L.].

SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND AND LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [H.L.].

Reported with amendments.

FOLKESTONE, SANDGATE, AND HYTHE TRAMROADS BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a.

ARMY AND NAVY INVESTMENT TRUST BILL [H.L.].

NEW RUSSIA COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

DONEGAL RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to order).

CHURCH'S PATENT BILL [H.L.].

EAST STIRLINGSHIRE WATER BILL [H.L.].

FALKIRK AND DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

FALKIRK CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

MOTHERWELL WATER BILL [H.L.].

EAST SHROPSHIRE WATER BILL [H.L.].

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD CORPORATION (WATER) BILL [H.L.].

GREAT BERKHAMPTON WATER BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills—viz :

E. Grey,
E. Camperdown (chairman),
L. Manners of Haddon,
L. Saltoun,
L. Sinclair;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

G

ASTON MANOR TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

HIGHAM FERRERS WATER BILL [H.L.].

IPSWICH CORPORATION TRAMWAYS
BILL [H.L.].LINCOLN CORPORATION (TRAMWAYS)
BILL [H.L.].MENSTONE WATER (TRANSFER) BILL
[H.L.].MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR
BOARD BILL [H.L.].

NEWPORT CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

NEWPORT (MONMOUTHSHIRE) GAS
BILL [H.L.].NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY (STEAM
VESSELS) BILL [H.L.].

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection,
That the following Lords be proposed to
the House to form the Select Committee
for the consideration of the said Bills—
viz. :

E. Lucan,
E. Verulam,
E. Dartrey,
L. Windsor (chairman),
L. Newton ;

agreed to ; and the said Lords appointed
accordingly. The Committee to meet on
Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock ; and all
petitions referred to the Committee, with
leave to the petitioners praying to be
heard by counsel against the Bills to be
heard as desired, as also counsel for the
Bills.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (MILITIA).

Militia Training Return, 1899.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

Explanatory Statement of the First Lord
of the Admiralty.

Presented (by Command), and ordered
to lie on the Table.

SHERIFFS' ACCOUNTS.

Treasury Warrant, dated 27th Novem-
ber, 1899, appointing Benjamin James
Bridgeman, Esq., and George William
Couch, Esq., to examine sheriffs' accounts.
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act),
and ordered to lie on the Table.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TELEGRAMS TO SOLDIERS ON SERVICE.

*THE EARL OF LICHFIELD : I beg to
ask the Postmaster General when the
scheme of registered telegraphic addresses
for the troops in South Africa, promised
by the Secretary of State for War, will
be put in force ; and whether, under that
scheme, four words costing sixteen
shillings will be insisted on as the minimum
for the address of a private soldier ; also,
whether the arrangements recently
announced in the press relating to a regis-
tered code word for inquiring about
wounded soldiers cannot be modified by
leaving out the name of the town or place
where the hospital is situated. At the
request of the noble Duke, I postponed
this question from last week until to-day,
with the result that the Postmaster
General has been enabled during the
interval to bring out the scheme. I do not
for a moment complain of this, because
my object in putting down the question
was to ascertain the cause of the delay.
I was beginning to fear that the scheme
would not be published until after the
completion of the war. The noble Mar-
quess the Secretary of State for War said,
on February 8th, in answer to a question
which I addressed to him—

"The Post Office has considered this matter
in conjunction with the Eastern Telegraph
Company. A list of code words has been
framed, and has been sent out to South Africa,
and, I think, must have arrived there two or
three days ago. As soon as the telegraphic
authorities at the Cape have informed us, as
they no doubt will by telegraph, that they are
able to accept the code, the new arrangement
will come into force and will be made known
by the Post Office here." *

The noble Marquess made that statement
nearly a month ago, and no doubt the
Postmaster General will be able to ex-
plain the cause of the great delay that
has taken place. The scheme appeared in
last Saturday's newspapers, but for a week
before then a most extraordinary state of
affairs existed. The Eastern Telegraph
Company had been advised, either by the
Post Office or the War Office, about
this scheme, and for a week before
it was made public the company were
taking messages under the scheme, with
the result that the fortunate man in the
street who went direct to the Eastern
Telegraph Company was able to send his
message at the reduced price, whereas the

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth
Series], Vol. lxxviii., p. 899.

unfortunate man in the street who used the Post Office was charged at the old rate. No doubt during that week all the messages that were sent by the Post Office through the Eastern Telegraph Company were charged to the Post Office at the reduced rate, and I should like to ask the Postmaster General whether he can see his way to refund to the public the excess charged to them during that week. With regard to the second part of my question, the scheme as I feared insists upon a minimum of four words for the address of a soldier, which therefore costs 16s. The four words consist, first of all, of the number of the private; secondly, of his name; thirdly, of the registered telegraphic address of his regiment; and, fourthly, of "Cape Town." I would venture to suggest that the name is quite unnecessary. A private is known by his number in the regiment, and a number can be safely sent by cable. All business men assert that they are accustomed to accept numbers sent by cable as thoroughly reliable, and if a number is reliable in business it should be reliable enough for this purpose. Moreover, the cable companies always repeat numbers to make sure that they arrive correctly at the other end; whereas they do not repeat a word. The insertion of the name of a private should certainly be left optional. With regard to "Cape Town," I had hoped that the Government would have seen their way to have incorporated it in the telegraphic address of the regiment, for all telegrams go to Cape Town. I should have thought the Government could easily have arranged this with the Eastern Telegraph Company, if necessary by paying them some small sum. But if the authorities do not see their way to go so far as this, I would urge them to approach the Telegraph Company with a view to their charging 2s. instead of 4s. for "Cape Town." Looking to the fact that the Eastern Telegraph Company have had an enormous increase of business in consequence of the war, I cannot but feel that they would be willing to meet the authorities in a liberal spirit and only charge half price. If my suggestions could be adopted the cost of the address would be reduced from 16s. to 8s. or 10s. This would be a substantial reduction, and one which would be very much appreciated. Coming to the last part of my question, I thank the

authorities for having introduced a registered code word signifying that the soldier is in hospital, but I am sorry to see in the statement that was issued that the name of the town or place in all cases must be added. This will to a great extent destroy the value of the concession, because the idea was that whenever anyone read in the paper that his relative or friend was wounded he might telegraph at once to find out how he was going on. How is it possible for the public to know to what town or place the wounded soldier is taken? It is impossible to know this until some weeks afterwards. Seeing that the authorities have all along taken letters to the troops with simply the words "Cape Colony" or "South Africa," and looking to the fact that under this new scheme they are going to deliver telegrams to soldiers not wounded without any town or place being named, they should do the same for wounded soldiers. If my proposal should be adopted I take it that the form would be this. For a wounded soldier you would put his regimental number, the name of his regiment, and the registered code word signifying that he was wounded and in hospital, and the authorities ought to have very little difficulty in sending that telegram to the hospital in which the wounded soldier lies. I hope the Government will consider these proposals, not so much as a concession to the public at home, but as a small concession to the troops who have been fighting so magnificently for us in South Africa.

LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL: My Lords, I hope I may be permitted to say a word on this question before the Postmaster General replies. We all, I am sure, take an interest in the troops in South Africa, and are delighted to find that a certain concession is being made in respect of telegrams to them; but I think every noble Lord in this House and every one in another place will feel that it would be quite possible to do still more. The troops are in the immediate service of the Government, and I do not think it would be too much to expect that a message might be sent—not only the address but the whole telegram—at a cost of two shillings a word. I am aware that it depends greatly with the Eastern Telegraph Company, but I should think that a great and wealthy corporation would be willing to accede to the

wish of the Government in this respect. We find that throughout the whole of the country companies and individuals are doing everything they can for the benefit and comfort of those who are fighting so bravely and nobly for us in South Africa. I regard it, my Lords, as the duty of everybody, whether a corporation or an individual, to do so, and I should hope that by a representation to the Eastern Telegraph Company it would be possible to give to the soldier the concession to which I have referred. It may seem a small sum to noble Lords, but 16s. may prevent a soldier from receiving the word of comfort he is longing for in his sufferings. I would go even further and would say to the noble Duke the Postmaster General that, in my opinion, it would meet the general approval if, by the aid of Government, a ten-word message could be sent to wounded soldiers for a shilling. I hardly think that the Eastern Telegraph Company would be willing to make such a reduction, but what would it be to this great country to pay a certain sum out of the Treasury to enable this to be done? We all know how anxious a mother, a sister, a wife, or, it may be, others equally near and dear to those in South Africa, are to have only one word with those of whom they think so much and whom they love so dearly. It would be a great consolation to them if they could obtain only one word direct. It is very different from seeing the news of them in the papers. I cannot think that it is impossible for such a scheme to be carried out, and I hope the advisability of it will go home to the heart of the noble Duke. We are all willing in this country to pay increased taxation that the honour and dignity of the Empire may be maintained and that its solidarity may be assured, and if the proposals of my noble friend cost a few hundreds or thousands of pounds I believe the money would be readily voted by Parliament. I apologise for detaining your Lordships so long, but I believe I have spoken what is the sentiment and the wish of the great majority of the people of this country.

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (The Duke of NORFOLK): The noble Earl stated that his motive in putting this question was to ascertain the cause of the delay in carrying out the scheme which was promised by my noble friend the

Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal.

Secretary of State for War. I am bound to say that his question does not suggest that that is in his mind. I may say, however, that the delay arose from causes on the other side. The War Office had some difficulty in getting satisfactory replies to the questions which they found it necessary to ask. The answer I have prepared to the question of the noble Earl is as follows:—The scheme of registered telegraphic addresses for the troops in South Africa was put into force on the 3rd inst. Under that scheme the address must consist of at least four words, costing 16s. It must contain the number and name of the soldier (two words), the name of the regiment, which will be counted as one word, and the address to Cape Town, which is also chargeable as one word. I have communicated with the Secretary of State for War as to the possibility of this number being reduced, and if anything further can be done in this direction a notification on the subject will at once be issued. The arrangements referred to in the last part of the question are still under consideration, but the name of the town or place of destination is, of course, a necessary part of the address of any telegram. I am sure every one in this House must feel the fullest sympathy with the noble Lords who have spoken on this subject, but, of course, there are difficulties to be dealt with in the matter. It rests, as the noble Earl said, largely in the hands of the Eastern Telegraph Company. It is not a matter that is in the hands of the Government. It is for the noble Marquess to consider the proposal that the Government should undertake part of the expense. I can only say that the Government have already shown great liberality in similar matters, and I think it is possible they may feel that the pressure is becoming unduly encouraged by what has been done. As regards the statement by the noble Earl, that before our scheme was properly under way the company themselves resorted to this system of code words, that, of course, is their business; but if, on inquiry, it is found that we have been unduly charging the public for soldiers' telegrams which have been sent at the cheaper rate, we shall take all the means in our power to refund any moneys so received by us.

*THE EARL OF LICHFIELD: I beg to thank the noble Duke for his

answer, but I cannot look upon it as very satisfactory. He said it was a matter for the Eastern Telegraph Company and not for the Government, but unless the Government approach the company the latter will naturally charge the full rates. I venture to suggest that the Government should consider whether they could not approach the company and get some reduction for the troops and for the public. I hope the noble Duke will reconsider this question. He stated in his answer that the name must be put in, but I still maintain that it is quite unnecessary. With regard to the hospital scheme, I cannot understand how it is possible for people in this country to know in what hospital their wounded friends are placed. Surely, what the authorities are doing for soldiers who are not wounded they could do for soldiers who are, and deliver telegrams at the hospitals where the men may be lying. I hope if any concessions are made a fresh statement will be issued to the public including both the Post Office scheme and the Hospital scheme.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I think the suggestion of the noble Earl follows directly on the lines of the instructions that are given by the Post Office for the direction of letters. I believe the proper way to address a letter for a soldier in South Africa is to give his name, his regiment, and the words "South Africa." It seems to me that a similar arrangement with regard to telegrams might very well be adopted, and the telegram forwarded to the place where the soldier actually is.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): We shall be glad to do all in our power to further abbreviate these messages for the benefit of those who desire to send them. Something has been achieved. But, as the Postmaster General has said, it does not lie entirely with us on this side to dictate our own terms. There has been a somewhat troublesome negotiation with the local Post Office authorities, and some time, no doubt, was spent in overcoming those difficulties. I will make note of the suggestion that we might substitute for the soldier's name in these messages his regimental number. If it is possible to carry that out I shall be very glad to facilitate such an arrangement.

THE EARL OF LICHFIELD: The scheme directs that both the number and the name should be given.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I promise my noble friend to consider his suggestion, and I think he must be content with that. With regard to the other suggestion, that it might be possible in case of inquiries after a wounded soldier to omit the name of the station at which the wounded man might happen to be in hospital, I am told that that would not be an easy arrangement, and considerable delay might be incurred while the principal medical officer to whom the telegram is addressed is finding out at what particular station in Cape Colony or Natal the man for whom the message was intended happened to be quartered, but I shall be glad to look into the matter further if the noble Earl desires it. With regard to the rates per word, they are, I understand, determined by standing arrangement with the Eastern Telegraph Company, and I do not know that it would be an easy matter to obtain a reconsideration of those rates.

House adjourned at five minutes before Five of the clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 6th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely—

London and North Western Railway Bill.

London and North Western Railway (Wales) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

ABERDEEN CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

HUNTINGDON CORPORATION BILL (BY ORDER).

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

KNOTT END RAILWAY BILL (BY ORDER).

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 20th March.

OSSETT GAS BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

SOUTH EASTERN METROPOLITAN TRAMWAYS BILL (BY ORDER).

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

WELLINGBOROUGH AND DISTRICT TRAMROADS BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I have an Instruction on the Paper with regard to this Bill which I understand the promoters are willing to consider favourably. It is to the same effect as the Instructions carried last week with regard to similar Bills, and the object is to secure some necessary amendments in the clause relating to cheap fares for the labouring classes and the hours at which workmen's cars shall run. In this Bill the clause is in about the worst form of any I have seen this session, for it provides that the cars shall not run after 6 a.m. or till after 6 p.m. I beg to move the Instruction standing in my name.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Wellingborough and District Tramroads Bill to inquire whether it is desirable that Clause 44 of the Bill (Cheap fares for the labouring classes) should be amended in respect of the hours at which the cars should be run, the number of cars to be provided, and the maximum and the minimum fares to be charged.—(*Mfr. Lough.*)

TAUNTON CORPORATION BILL.

MR. STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): I beg to move the Instruction standing in my name, and I do so with the knowledge

that not only the Taunton Corporation but the people of the county of Somerset agree to it, and that it will be supported by the hon. Members for Taunton and West Somerset, whose names are on the back of the Bill. On the Second Reading of this Bill* the Secretary to the Local Government Board objected to the Instruction I am about to move, because the clause, as it stands in the Bill, represents a compromise arrived at on the subject last session between representatives of the Local Government Board, the Board of Agriculture, the municipal corporations, and the Parliamentary Committee of the Central Chamber of Agriculture. But I would point out that the representatives of the County Councils Association were not asked to the conference. And why? Because if they had taken part in it they would undoubtedly have protested against the invasion of their rights which was agreed to. What is proposed by the Bill is an unnecessary interference with the proper and legitimate duties of county councils. Last year the Corporation of Leeds inserted in its Bill a clause similar to the Instruction I am now proposing, and if the Instruction is adopted, the end aimed at by the clause, namely, that of ensuring the supply of uncontaminated milk, will be attained without injustice being done to the farmer. It will be remembered that the Local Government Board objected to the Leeds clause, and the Committee, after hearing Mr. Boyce, their representative, rejected it; but the county councils of the West Riding of Yorkshire felt so strongly about it, and were so cordially supported by the urban and rural local authorities, that they got it re-inserted by the Lords Committee, who held that the model clause of the Local Government Board constituted an unnecessary interference with the local authorities. The Committee also recognised the fairness and justice of taking these cases before two justices instead of one, so as to secure a proper hearing for the farmer. I shall perhaps be met with the argument that it is the duty of the Local Government Board to see after the proper sanitation of dairies, and to secure that the milk sold does not contain the slightest taint. I agree with that, and

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxix., p. 1516.

I would point out that under Section 34 of the Diseases of Animals Act they are empowered to act when the local authority fails to do its duty. There is, therefore, not the slightest ground for saying that these clauses are necessary in the interests of the supply of pure milk. All parties are agreed on the main matter, and therefore it simply comes to this, that the Local Government Board wishes to force on the people of Somerset a form of procedure which they object to. The Somerset Chamber of Commerce has expressed an opinion favourable to my Instruction, and to-day the Central Chamber of Agriculture has passed a resolution approving of the clause being inserted. Therefore it resolves itself into this, that the Local Government Board are going to dictate to the people of Taunton what local regulations they shall possess, whether they like them or not.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington): I have very little to say in seconding this Instruction beyond what has been advanced by the hon. Member for South Somerset. As one of the backers of the Bill I communicated with the Corporation of Taunton, and they readily agreed to the insertion of the clause suggested in the Instruction. As regards the attitude of the Local Government Board, I would ask why that Department, in this case, wishes to deprive the farmers of ordinary justice. The demand is simply that, before the corporation goes outside its own boundary, an order of two justices shall be obtained, and I think that is a perfectly fair and reasonable proposal. In my opinion, this question of the right of municipalities to go outside their own areas ought not to be dealt with by private Bills, but by a public Bill dealing with the whole case. I am afraid that the policy of the Government is to let these clauses be inserted in a lot of private Bills, and then to turn round and say that, since every corporation has them, they shall be the law of the land. That is a very intelligible policy, but not a very honest one. If the Government oppose this Instruction, they will be agreeing to different laws for different counties, since Leeds already has such a clause. Yorkshire is a large, rich, and thickly populated county, while Somersetshire is comparatively small, weak, and poor; but I think that the farmers of Somerset should have at least

the same measure of justice meted out to them as those of Yorkshire. I sincerely hope that the hon. Member will go to a division, if only as a protest against this anomaly, against a proposal which would enable a body which is not a judicial body to act as judge and jury in its own case and to close any man's premises. I know of no other business which could be closed in the same way.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Taunton Corporation Bill to provide in Part III. of the Bill that the powers of the Corporation and their officers to inspect cows and dairies outside the borough be not exercised without the previous order of two Justices sitting in Petty Sessions and having jurisdiction in the district wherein the dairy is situate, and that such order be not made unless the said Justices are satisfied that the local authority of the said district has not already dealt with the case."—(*Mr. Strachey.*)

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I heartily agree with my hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Wellington Division in wishing that this subject could be dealt with in a public Bill on broad lines. But I wish to support as wise and on the whole as the best compromise on this question the model clauses which were arrived at last year. I do not know what course the Government propose to take, but I hope the House will support that compromise. How were these model clauses arrived at? Bills were introduced by several most important corporations in the north of England taking the power already enjoyed and exercised by the city of Glasgow to go outside their own areas in order to prevent the inhabitants being supplied with contaminated milk from the rural districts. That was a very wide power, and it was only after consultation between the President of the Local Government Board and representatives of the Board of Agriculture and the Central Chamber of Agriculture that these model clauses were drafted. It seems to me that they go quite far enough in the way of limiting the powers of these communities to protecting the health of the inhabitants, and that if we are to set up the jurisdiction of two county magistrates sitting in petty

sessions, who might possibly look solely to the interests of the farmers supplying the milk, we should be taking the serious step of increasing the obstacles which already stand in the way of the authorities protecting the health of the inhabitants of great towns in this matter of milk supply.

*MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) suggested that instead of pressing this mandatory Instruction to the Committee, the hon. Member should consent to insert before the words "to provide," the words "to consider whether it is desirable."

MR. STRACHEY: I am afraid I cannot accept that.

*MR. JEFFREYS thought that a very unwise decision, as the Committee would be able with such an Instruction to consider the whole matter.

MR. STRACHEY: They considered it last year, and objected to it.

*MR. JEFFREYS reminded the House that in the agreement that was come to last year it was thought by several that the order of one magistrate in a locality to inspect farm premises would be sufficient, but in the House of Lords it was thought better to require two magistrates. Surely it would be wise so to word the Instruction that the Committee would seriously consider whether the order of one magistrate was sufficient, or whether it would be a greater protection to the farmers if the order of two magistrates was required.

*MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) trusted the House would not accept the Instruction. The matter would doubtless be considered fully before the Committee, and the evidence taken would be printed. If after reading the evidence the hon. Gentleman the mover of the Instruction was not satisfied with the action of the Committee, he would still have an opportunity of bringing the matter before the House.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.) could not understand why, if all the districts concerned were agreed, that agreement should be overthrown or objected to by the Local Government Board. If the right hon. Gentleman thought a uniform

Mr. Channing.

clause throughout the country was desirable, a public Bill ought to be introduced dealing with this important question. But if he did not consider it worth special legislation in that way the question ought to be settled to a large extent by the opinion of the locality. He ventured to think, however, that the Police and Sanitary Committee was not the best body to deal with the matter, as that Committee was very much in the hands of the Local Government Board. But if the right hon. Gentleman would say that his Department would not interfere with or put pressure upon the Committee he would be inclined to advise the acceptance of the modified Instruction suggested by a previous speaker.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton) thought that if the Instruction was allowed to pass, it being made perfectly clear that it was not to be regarded as a precedent, it would be a recognition of the unity of interests between the small county boroughs and the district around, and would show the right hon. Gentleman's sympathy with agriculture.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I think this proposed Instruction is to be deprecated on various grounds. The hon. Member who moved the Instruction bases his support of it upon the ground that it is desirable in the interests of agriculture. I am probably as much interested in agriculture as any Member of this House, and my opinion is that even upon that ground alone it would be difficult to show that the Instruction was desirable. The House remembers what has happened with regard to this question in the past. Of late years there has been a very laudable and proper desire to arrest, in the interest of public health, the spread of tuberculosis, and measures which were proposed with this object last year brought me into conflict at once with two great and different interests—the interest of agriculture on the one hand, and the interest represented by medical experts and those interested in public health on the other. A number of private Bills were brought in last year purely in the interests of public health, but were held to be extremely injurious to certain branches of the agricultural interest. As President of the Local

Government Board these Bills naturally came before me. In conjunction with my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Agriculture I resolved to see whether some arrangement could not be made by which these two great interests on this question would be brought to a common understanding. After much trouble and many conferences between representatives of the agricultural interest on the one hand, and medical and sanitary experts on the other, an arrangement was arrived at, and clauses, which have been referred to as model clauses, agreed to. The view, certainly, of my right hon. friend, of myself, and of most of those interested in medical science was that the arrangement was a very desirable one, and one which ought to be adhered to. That, however, is not the view of the hon. Member opposite. He has come forward with a mandatory Instruction, which upon that ground I think is to be highly deprecated, and he seeks to impose upon the Committee upstairs the duty of including this particular clause in the Bill. I think the House will see itself that it is not desirable that such an Instruction should be passed. I have been asked whether the Local Government Board will interfere. My intention with regard to that would be to leave this question entirely for the consideration of the Committee. I would ask the House to remember that a general agreement has been come to between the two parties, and now it is sought to override that arrangement. If such a course is adopted in this particular case, what is to prevent the powerful representatives of the medical and sanitary interests attempting to reverse what has been done in the past, and introducing clauses far more extreme and far more injurious in their character to the agricultural interests than at present exist? If on no other grounds than that of the interest of agriculture itself, I most strongly advise the rejection of this Instruction.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade) said he was very anxious that a compromise should be arrived at. There was really a great deal to be said on both sides. He himself might perhaps be suspected of being unduly prejudiced in regard to what might be called the county view of the question, because he was intimately connected with the administration of the

county, but he had very great sympathy with any effort made by a borough authority to obtain a purer supply of milk within its own district. That effort could not be effective unless a borough authority or the urban council had some power of control immediately outside its own limits, or unless the county authority were thoroughly in earnest with regard to sanitary control and inspection. In the north of England, which was more progressive than the south, the county authorities might be trusted in the matter, but when a borough authority in the south of England asked for powers to enable it to deal with the causes of sanitary contamination outside its own area the House threw cold water on the demand. A county employing a medical officer of health stood in a different position from that occupied by a county without such an officer. The county of Somerset, although the question was twice discussed, had not appointed a medical officer of health. Not long ago there was a terrible outbreak of infectious disease in Bristol in which many valuable lives were sacrificed, especially in Clifton College, and in the report on that outbreak by the medical officer of health for Bristol, Somerset did not occupy a very strong position. Therefore he hoped that the hon. Member, in view of the large concession to his views which had been made, would not persist in his Instruction.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said he would rather that the House should express an opinion on the Instruction, for it involved a very important matter affecting the public health. If the corporation of Taunton discovered that the residents were being poisoned by infectious matter introduced from outside it was important that it should have the earliest opportunity of finding out the source of that poison. The Instruction would involve very considerable delay. The matter was urgent and he hoped the House would reject the Instruction in the interests of agriculturists no less than of the public health.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) asked if the Government agreed to the assent of one justice being obtained.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W.

RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): Yes, Sir. That Question put.
provision is included in the bill.

The House divided :—Ayes, 109 ; Noes,

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER said he was | 172. (Division List No. 58.)
inclined to accept the modification.

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)	Goschen, George J. (Sussex)	O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
Anson, Sir William Reynell	Goulding, Edward Alfred	O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Archdale, Edward Mervyn	Gray, Ernest (West Ham)	O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
Atherley-Jones, L.	Gretton, John	O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)	Gull, Sir Cameron	Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Balcarres, Lord	Haldane, Richard Burdon	Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
Baldwin, Alfred	Hardy, Laurence	Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. Smith (Hunts)	Hare, Thomas Leigh	Perks, Robert William
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)	Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)	Philipps, John Wynford
Beach, Rt. Hon. W. W. B. (Hants)	Heaton, John Henniker	Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.	Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.	Power, Patrick Joseph
Bethell, Commander	Hobhouse, Henry	Pretyman, Ernest George
Blake, Edward	Houston, R. P.	Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Blundell, Colonel Henry	Howell, William Tudor	Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme	Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil	Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)	Hudson, George Bickersteth	Round, James
Bowles, T. G. (King's Lynn)	Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice	Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Caldwell, James	Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)	Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Carew, James Laurence	Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.	Simeon, Sir Barrington
Carlile, William Walter	Kilbride, Denis	Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)	Knowles, Lees	Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis	Laurie, Lieut.-General	Stevenson, Francis S.
Colston, Chas. E. H. Athole	Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)	Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Hereford)	Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.	Tanner, Charles Kearns
Cornwallis, Fienes Stanley W.	Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)	Tollenache, Henry James
Denny, Colonel	Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller	Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir William H.
Donelan, Captain A.	Lough, Thomas	Wedderburn, Sir William
Doogan, P. C.	Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)	Weir, James Galloway
Dorington, Sir John Edward	Macaleese, Daniel	Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
Engledew, Charles John	Macartney, W. G. Ellison	Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Fardell, Sir T. George	Maclure, Sir John William	Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edwd.	McKillop, James	Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Finch, George H.	Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert E.	Xoxall, James Henry
Fison, Frederick William	Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)	
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)	Morrison, Walter	
Garfit, William	Myers, Wm. Henry	
Gold, Charles	Nicol, Donald Ninian	
Gordon, Hon. John Edward	Norton, Captain Cecil W.	

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Strachey and Sir
Alexander Acland-Hood.

NOES.

Allison, Robert Andrew	Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)	Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Anstruther, H. T.	Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)	Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Mane'r)
Arnold, Alfred	Channing, Francis Allston	Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Arrol, Sir William	Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry	Fisher, William Hayes
Baird, John Geo. Alexander	Clough, Walter Owen	Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Banbury, Frederick George	Coghill, Douglas Harry	Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Barnes, Frederic Gorell	Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse	Flower, Ernest
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)	Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)	Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.	Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.	Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Billson, Alfred	Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.	Fry, Lewis
Brigg, John	Crombie, John William	Galloway, William Johnson
Broudhurst, Henry	Cross, H. Shepherd (Bolton)	Gedge, Sydney
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson	Cubitt, Hon. Henry	Goddard, Daniel Ford
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James	Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh	Goldsworthy, Major-General
Brymer, William Ernest	Dalkeith, Earl of	Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn	Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)	Graham, Henry Robert
Bullard, Sir Harry	Dewar, Arthur	Greville, Hon. Ronald
Buxton, Sydney Charles	Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles	Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Cameron, Sir Chas. (Glasgow)	Drage, Geoffrey	Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Cameron, Robert (Durham)	Duckworth, James	Hanson, Sir Reginald
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dundin)	Dunn, Sir William	Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)	Ellis, John Edward	Hazell, Walter
Cayzer, Sir Charles William	Emmott, Alfred	Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.

Horniman, Frederick John
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
 Howard, Joseph
 Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
 Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
 Kimber, Henry
 Kinloch, Sir John George S.
 Labouchere, Henry
 Lafone, Alfred
 Langley, Battý
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn)
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'lnd)
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swans.)
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Cumb'lnd)
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 McCrae, George
 McIver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
 Maddison, Fred.
 Marks, Henry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks)
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Middelmore, J. Throgmorton

Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monk, Charles James
 Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropsh.)
 Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lanc. S. W.)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Redmond, William (Clare)
 Renshaw, Charles Bine
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
 Richardson, Sir Thos. (Hartlepool)
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T.
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Rothschild, Hon. L. Walter
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Samuel, H. S. (Limehouse)
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarsh.)

Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Stanley, Sir H. M. (Lambeth)
 Steadman, William Charles
 Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G. (Oxford Univ.)
 Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Wm. E. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Wason, Eugene
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
 Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
 Wilson, F. W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worshire, N.)
 Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (H'fd.)
 Woods, Samuel
 Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. McKenna and Sir
 Albert Rollit.

LANCASTER CORPORATION BILL (BY ORDER.)

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): It is at the request of the Nonconformists of the burgh of Lancaster and of other inhabitants that I move, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to leave out Clauses 90 and 91 (Provisions as to tithe in the town of Lancaster)." I may be told that in doing so I am acting contrary to the wishes of a large portion of the inhabitants of Lancaster; but while I admit that the people of Lancaster are in favour of the Bill as a whole, there is yet a strong body of opposition to the clauses to which I wish to call the attention of the House. It is true that a town's meeting held in January last expressed approval of the Bill, but that meeting was held at a time of the day when few of the inhabitants could attend. It was also very imperfectly advertised; the result being that very few were present—not above thirty. At the opening of the meeting the mayor made a statement that the resolution to be submitted in favour of the Bill must be either accepted or rejected as a whole, and that he could accept no amendment. The result was

that those who were opposed to these two clauses could not object to them without rejecting the measure as a whole. An opinion was expressed on that occasion that the meeting should be adjourned to the evening, but that was defeated, and the Bill was sanctioned by twenty-one against eight inhabitants. That is the extent to which the clauses are approved of. It may be further objected that the inhabitants might have petitioned against the clauses, but the answer to that is that the inhabitants apart from the corporation have no *locus standi*. The House will bear in mind that the clergy of this country who receive their incomes from tithe rent-charge do so under the general law of 1836—the Tithe Commutation Act. The House also knows that the amount of the tithe rent-charge received by the clergy is dependent upon the seven years average of the price of corn—with this result, that £100 of tithe rent-charge is now only worth £66 15s. 9½d. If the vicar of Lancaster were remunerated on the same terms he would be receiving less than a third of the sum which he actually receives. But the vicar of Lancaster is not subject to such vicissitudes as

his brother clergy. He has the benefit of an Act of Parliament all to himself—an Act passed in the reign of George IV.—in the days of close and corrupt corporations, before the passing of the Reform Act of 1832 and the Municipal Corporations Act of 1843, when it was possible to perpetrate any job, either in Church or State, with the utmost facility. At that time the tithes were paid in kind almost everywhere, and the Act recites that disputes had arisen in regard to the amounts which were payable. It also contains this curious statement: that several of the townships of the parish of Lancaster are at a considerable distance from the parsonage of Lancaster, and that the collection of the tithes and of the Easter offerings is thereby rendered difficult and made expensive; and so for the convenience of the vicar and the benefit of the occupiers, the tithes and Easter dues were abolished, and a substitute was found for them. It was then enacted that a corn rent of £1,358 should be raised from certain townships in Lancaster, and a special provision was made that the borough of Lancaster should pay £42 10s. a year out of the poor rate, and £167 10s. in a corn rent. The House will be astonished to hear what was the basis of calculation on which the amount of corn rent of £1,358 was fixed in the Act. It was upon the basis that wheat would never be lower than 97s. 6d. per quarter, and it was expressly provided that, however low the price of wheat might be, the corn rent should never be below £1,358. Now wheat in the year 1823, the year before the Act was passed, was sold at the rate of only 53s. 4d. per quarter, and at the present time it is sold at the rate of 26s. 10d. per quarter. I think the House will agree with me that that was a most exorbitant provision at that time; but it has become scandalously exorbitant now. Since the Act was passed a complete change has taken place in the parish of Lancaster. What were then the rural parts of the townships have now been divided into district parishes, with their own churches, their own clergy, and their own parochial machinery, and the inhabitants of most of these townships receive no guidance, no spiritual instruction, no help from the vicar of Lancaster. The clergy of these district parishes are paid out of pew-rents, subscriptions, and a few small endowments; but in

Mr. Carvell Williams.

addition to the money voluntarily paid for this purpose, the inhabitants of the townships have to pay their share of the £1,358 received by the non-resident vicar of Lancaster. The only point of connection between the vicar and these particular townships is what may be termed a cash nexus. Then, strange to say, the vicar retains the patronage of some of the churches in these townships. All this has been going on for three quarters of a century, and this Bill proposes that, except in a very fragmentary way, it should go on still. There is another point; instead of the vicar collecting the tithe himself, each township must appoint two, three, or four collectors to collect its quota of the amount of £1,358 due. Whatever may have been the case when the Act was passed, the office of collector at the present time has become most disagreeable. Because it was opposed by the Nonconformists, some of them have been compelled by the force of law to undertake what is to them an odious duty; and in the last few weeks, the parish having neglected to appoint collectors, a mandamus has been issued to compel them to do so. Objection is taken not only to the mode of collection, but also to the exaction. If the Lancaster Corporation had made a bold attempt to remove this grievance it would have been far better; but instead of doing that they have dealt with the matter in a fragmentary, narrow, and pettifogging manner, the result being to leave untouched the real grievance, which will remain as it is in all the townships not affected by this Bill. It does not even remove the grievance in the district in which it is to operate. In my opinion the House will do a service, not only to the town of Lancaster, but to the Church also, by rejecting these clauses, and thereby compelling the corporation to deal with this subject, not in the spirit of the times of the Georges, but in accordance with the better sentiments of these times.

MR. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) formally seconded the motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Lancaster Corporation Bill to leave out Clauses 90 and 91 (Provisions as to tithe in the township of Lancaster)."—*(Mr. Carvell Williams.)*

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The hon. Gentleman who has just resumed his seat anticipated that I should have something to say in this matter, and the sooner I say it the sooner the debate will reach a conclusion. The House is becoming somewhat impatient of Instructions to the Committee to do things which the Committee can do without Instructions, and I look on all such Instructions with suspicion. I look on mandatory Instructions with grave suspicion, but when those mandatory Instructions are to give powers to the Police and Sanitary Committee, I look upon them with the gravest suspicion. If these two clauses are removed, the effect will be to retain for the Vicar a sum of £76 a year which he is ready to sacrifice. I cannot say if what is proposed is a fair bargain or not, because I have no means of testing the evidence. Under the circumstances, what I shall ask the House to do is not to pursue this question, but to send the matter before a Committee, who, having all the evidence before them, and having heard all sides, will arrive at a conclusion. If they consider the Bill is a fair one they will accept the clauses, if they come to any other conclusion they will reject it.

Question put, and negatived.

SOUTH METROPOLITAN GAS BILL (BY ORDER).

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): The Instruction which I have placed upon the Paper appears complicated in form, but it is really very simple in its object. The object of the Instruction is that this House instructs the Committee on the South Metropolitan Gas Bill to insert certain clauses in the Bill to carry out the recommendations of the Select Committee which considered the metropolitan gas companies. I think it will be agreed that this Instruction, at any rate, is absolutely necessary, because the Select Committee to which reference is made was a very important body appointed by the present Government, moved for by the other side of the House, and which carried on its deliberations for three or four months of last year. Unless such an Instruction as is down on the Paper is agreed to, the Gas Bill which has already passed a Second Reading this year, and other Gas Bills, might go up to Committee after Committee without any regard being had

to the important decisions that were arrived at by this very weighty Select Committee, which was presided over by the hon. Baronet Sir James Rankin, whom I see opposite. Therefore, I desire that we should instruct the Committee to have regard to the recommendations that that Select Committee made. Now, there is a good precedent for the course that I ask the House to take. A Select Committee considered the question of Metropolitan Gas in the year 1875, and that Select Committee dealt with just the same objects as are dealt with in this Instruction—namely, the standard price, the sliding scale, and the amalgamation of areas; and the recommendations of that Committee of 1875 were adopted by the subsequent Committees which sat on Gas Bills; in fact, the whole gas law of the metropolis since has been shaped in accordance with the recommendations of that Committee. Therefore, I think it is a good precedent for the course that I ask the House to take this afternoon. Although the Instruction looks complicated and technical, in reality it is very simple. It deals with only two subjects, the first being the question of the standard price. It reduces the standard price of gas by 3d. per 1,000, but it gives a new sliding scale, and the effect of this sliding scale is that the reduction in price will not injure the company provided the price is low. That works out in this way. If the price of the gas is over 2s. 6d. per 1,000 feet, the new sliding scale prevents them from obtaining such a large dividend; if it is from 2s. 4d. to 2s. 6d. it will allow them to pay the same dividend; if it is under 2s. 4d. per 1,000 it allows them even a slightly higher dividend than they pay now. Therefore the object of this sliding scale that the Committee has recommended is to give a great inducement to the company to reduce the price of gas, and that is an object which has generally been pursued by this House in dealing with this gas question. That is the first object, to induce the Committee to have regard to the recommendations of the Select Committee with reference to the standard price and the sliding scale. I do not think I need discuss it further, because I believe the promoters of the Bill are willing to accept the Instruction; they recognise the advantage that it will be to them, and therefore I do not think I need delay the House any further on that.

The second part of the Instruction may just require a single word. The second part deals with the question of area, and it recommends that effect should be given to the finding of the Committee that a certain district which is now worked by the Gas Light and Coke Company on the south side of the river Thames should be transferred to the South Metropolitan Company. Now at present the South Metropolitan Company exercises great influence in that small area belonging to the other company which is south of the river, for it fixes the price of gas in it, and gas is sold as cheap in this small area as in the larger area of the South Metropolitan Company, but it does so at the expense of the north. The Gas Light and Coke Company explained to the Select Committee that they were only able to sell gas so cheap in that southern area of theirs by throwing a new burden upon the consumers of gas in the north. Now it does not seem fair that the people who consume gas in the north of London should have to pay in addition to the price of their own gas something to enable the people in the south of London to obtain their gas a little more cheaply. Therefore the Select Committee recommended that this anomaly should be done away with by the area being transferred to the South Metropolitan Company. I hope the House will consider that that is a very fair and reasonable recommendation, and that it will be willing to instruct the Committee to insert clauses in the Bill to carry out these two recommendations. The matter has become a very serious one in London, as the price of gas north of the river is quite 10d. per 1,000 feet higher than it is on the south side of the river. The Committee had good reason to hope that if these recommendations were carried into effect a substantial reduction in price would take place, and thus a great burden be taken off the people of the north of London. I think I have made the matter sufficiently clear, and as I understand that the company and the promoters of the Bill will not object to the Instruction, I hope that the House will pass it unanimously.

*MR. MARKS (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): In seconding the Instruction that has been proposed, I am not forgetful of the fact that suspicion frequently attaches to such Instructions given to

Committees, and that grave suspicion attaches when these Instructions take a mandatory form, but there are circumstances in connection with this particular matter which, I venture to think, differentiate it from almost all other cases that have recently come under the notice of the House. On an ordinary Second Reading of the Bill it would be perfectly competent to suggest, and no doubt it would be suggested, that the matters which are covered in this Instruction and cognate matters could well be threshed out before a Committee upstairs. In this particular case the matters have already been threshed out. The recommendations which are involved in this Instruction are not the opinions of any particular section of men. They are opinions and recommendations evolved by a Select Committee of this House after some four months careful and exhaustive inquiry. Let me remind the House that the Select Committee whose recommendations this Instruction deals with was appointed after no less than six years agitation on the part of gas consumers in various parts of the metropolis. Those consumers allege certain grievances—serious grievances—against the gas companies, and after repeated and the most earnest efforts, with great trouble and against great opposition, a Select Committee was finally appointed to inquire into the matter. That Committee investigated all the grievances, and it prepared a most careful and thorough Report, in which, after summing up all the evidence which had been taken on behalf of the consumers, and the evidence which had been given in public on behalf of the companies, it arrived at certain deliberate conclusions. Those conclusions were embodied in the recommendations of the Committee, and two of those recommendations—those which concern the South Metropolitan Company—form the subject matter of this Instruction. Now it might be urged that there is no necessity to have put this Instruction in such a mandatory form. I anticipate that some such objection may be urged. It may be said, Why not leave it to the Committee to consider these matters? But they have already been investigated by a Committee appointed *ad hoc*, and before that Committee, as I have said, the consumers appeared. Why should they be put to the necessity of appearing twice? Why should these people, who after five years

Mr. Lough.

of earnest effort did finally get a hearing, be compelled after that hearing has ended to come and try their case over again? If the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into what is a public grievance is a serious matter one might naturally assume—at least, a comparatively young Member of this House might be pardoned for assuming—that the Report of that Committee should bear some fruit. This is about the only way in which the Report of the Committee ever can bear any fruit. The recommendations of the Committee were designed to take effect when the companies concerned should come to the House for any extension or alteration of their capital powers. This company now comes to this House for an extension and alteration of its capital powers. The event anticipated by the Committee has arisen, and in seconding this Instruction I do urge the House to give effect to the principles which the Committee has embodied in its very careful and weighty Report: to adhere to the recommendations of its own Committee, and to allow the gas-consuming public of the metropolis to derive the benefits of the investigation finally allowed them.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
“That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the South Metropolitan Gas Bill to insert such Clauses in the Bill as may be required to give effect to Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Gas Companies, as follows:—

(1) That the standard price shall be reduced to 3s. 3d. to carry the standard dividend of 10 per cent., and that the existing scale of increase and decrease for dividend of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every penny of increase or decrease of price below or above 3s. 3d. be maintained, and that a secondary or additional scale be imposed which should permit of an increase or decrease of dividend over and above that regulated by the present scale of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every complete 3d. of decrease or increase below or above the standard price of 3s. 3d.

(2) That the area south of the River Thames, at present part of the district of the Gas Light and Coke Company, should be transferred from the Gas Light and Coke Company to the South Metropolitan Gas Company at a fair and reasonable price.”—(*Mr. Lough*).

SIR JAMES RANKIN (Hereford, Leominster): I rise to move an Amendment to the Instruction which has just been moved by my hon. friend opposite, and it is to the effect of preventing that Instruction being of a mandatory character. Having had the honour of being chairman of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Gas Companies, I agree to a very great extent with the conclusions at which they arrived, but I do not think it is fair that on the companies coming before the House with their various Bills connected with this matter the South Metropolitan Gas Company and the Gas Light and Coke Company should not have a chance of being heard upon the recommendations of the Committee. Although, no doubt, we had before us very full evidence on the whole of the matter, yet our recommendations were never argued or considered directly by the gas companies. My chief reason in wishing to move this Amendment is this, that although the South Metropolitan Gas Company may agree to the Instruction moved by my hon. friend—and I admit it would have very little effect upon them, because they are a very well-managed gas company and produce gas at a very low rate—yet if that Instruction were carried it would equally affect the Gas Light and Coke Company. That company has not agreed to this Instruction, and, I think it is only fair that they should have a hearing on this matter before the Committee upstairs before a conclusion is arrived at. I would point out that it is a very complex matter indeed, although my hon. friend will say it is a very simple one. I doubt very much whether, on once reading it over, any Member would understand exactly the effect which is carried out by this Instruction. With regard to the transfer of the area now belonging to the Gas Light and Coke Company south of the Thames to the South Metropolitan Gas Company a great number of complex arrangements would have to be made before it could be fairly carried out. I would also point out that the mere price of coal would have a very considerable effect upon fixing a standard price. I think all the matters should be heard and should be considered by the Council upstairs before we pass a mandatory Instruction. I would venture to suggest that if after the word “Committee” in

the second line of my hon. friend's Instruction the words, "to consider whether it be desirable" were inserted it would make it a perfectly fair Instruction to be carried. I think myself that it is highly desirable that this Committee upstairs should have regard to the various recommendations made by the Select Committee of last year, and in case—which is very improbable, I must say—their attention was not directed to it, I therefore quite agree to an Instruction of that sort; and I rather apprehend that my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade would agree to such an Instruction also. I think I have stated sufficient reason upon general grounds—and here I may say I altogether agree with my right hon. friend the Chairman of Ways and Means, in his views as to what should guide the House in dealing with these matters—I think I have stated enough to show that it would be better to allow the Committee upstairs a free hand rather than tying it by a mandatory Instruction in the House.

Amendment proposed—

"To insert, after the word 'Committee' in line 2, the words 'to consider whether it is desirable.'"—(*Sir James Rankin.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I hope the hon. Member who moved this Instruction will agree to the Amendment. I think that it is a practical impossibility for the House, upon an *ex parte* statement, to take upon themselves to decide whether the Committee to which this Bill should be referred should be ordered to insert in the Bill certain clauses which have been recommended by a Select Committee. Of course, the recommendations of the Select Committee must necessarily carry with them great weight before the Committee on the Bill. They would in any case, I think, have to consider them, but if the Committee decide to accept the recommendations it should be because in their discretion they think the recommendations are reasonable. If we are to instruct definitely the Committee to insert in the Bill these recommendations, it would, practically, be giving the powers of a law to the recommendations of Select Committees; and I do not think it would be advisable for

Sir James Rankin.

the House to agree to that. My hon. friend the Member for St. George's in the East has said that these companies have been heard. That is quite true: they have been heard before the Committee on the general question; but they have never been heard upon the special recommendations made by the Select Committee, and I think they are entitled to be heard, and I believe the House will so consider. I do not think the hon. Gentleman will be in any way damaging the cause for which he has been five years fighting if he accepts the suggestion of my hon. friend the Member for Leominster, and if he does accept it I think he will be placing the Committee in the position, in which they ought to be placed, of hearing the evidence which will be brought before them on these Bills.

MR. LOUGH: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether I understand him to say that he would recommend that both Bills should go to the same Committee?

MR. RITCHIE: I did not say so, but I assumed that it would be so. I think that both the South Metropolitan and the Gas Light and Coke Companies' Bills ought to go to the same Committee, so that they may both be considered at the same time.

*MR. MARKS: May I ask my right hon. friend if the addition of the words proposed will enable the Committee to add these clauses if they find them desirable?

MR. RITCHIE: Most undoubtedly it will.

MR. LOUGH: On the Amendment, I think the words, even if we accept the sense of the hon. Baronet opposite, who has moved them, might be a little improved. We might put it, "to consider, and, if desirable, insert." I am sure that would meet the hon. Baronet's wish, and I think those words are distinctly better. After what has fallen from the President of the Board of Trade, whose assistance in this matter one would naturally desire to secure, if the hon. Baronet would amend his Amendment in that form, I would accept it.

MR. RITCHIE: Does that not seem to imply that they should consider, and if they think desirable to put in these clauses, they shall, but they shall not put them in in any form? Would that not seem to be implied? I think that would be unfortunate.

SIR JAMES RANKIN: I think I must press my Amendment.

MR. LOUGH: Very well, Sir, I will accept the Amendment.

Question put, and agreed to.

Amendment made—

"By inserting after the word 'Committee,' in line 2, the words 'to consider whether it is desirable.'"—(Sir James Rankin.)

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an instruction to the Committee on the South Metropolitan Gas Bill to consider whether it is desirable to insert such Clauses in the Bill as may be required to give effect to Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Gas Companies, as follows:—

(1) That the standard price should be reduced to 3s. 3d. to carry the standard dividend of 10 per cent., and that the existing scale of increase and decrease for dividend of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every penny of increase or decrease of price below or above 3s. 3d. be maintained, and that a secondary or additional scale be imposed which should permit of an increase or decrease of dividend over and above that regulated by the present scale of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every complete 3d. of decrease or increase below or above the standard price of 3s. 3d.

(2) That the area south of the river Thames, at present part of the district of the Gas Light and Coke Company, should be transferred from the Gas Light and Coke Company to the South Metropolitan Gas Company at a fair and reasonable price.

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Reported, without Amendment (Provisional Order confirmed); Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow.

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MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Reported, without Amendment (Provisional Order confirmed); Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow.

PONTEFRAC T PARK BILL.

Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

RUGELEY GAS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Committee:—

1. "That, in the case of the Central London Railway, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

2. "That, in the case of the West Ham Corporation Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision, if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

3. "That, in the case of the Christchurch, Bournemouth, and Winton Tramways Petition, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Sections I. and III. of the Tramways proposed to be authorised by the Bill be struck out:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

4. "That, in the case of the Llandrindod Wells Water Petition, the Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

First three Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

DECLARATION OF PARIS.

Petition from Macclesfield, for annulment; to lie upon the Table.

H

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY (EXEMPTION FROM RATES).

Petition from St. Mary, Stoke Newington, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Blaydon; Ryton; Little Malton; and Manchester; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petition from Elsecar, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Catford; and Bolton-le-Moors; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Southampton; Glasgow; Forest Gate; and Peterborough; to lie upon the Table.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Selkirk, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SHERIFFS' ACCOUNTS.

Copy presented, of Treasury Warrant, dated 27th November, 1899, appointing Benjamin James Bridgeman, esquire, and George William Couch, esquire, to examine Sheriffs' Accounts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (MILITIA TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS).

Copy presented, of Militia Training Return, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION.

Accounts presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1899, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 86.]

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—NUMBER OF BOER PRISONERS.

MR. SCOTT-MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state the number of Boer prisoners of war now in Capetown or its vicinity, excluding the recent capture of General Cronje's force.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): In the absence of my hon. friend the Under Secretary for War perhaps I may be allowed to answer the question addressed to his department. Excluding the Boers captured at Paardeberg, and others who were captured in the other engagements connected with Lord Roberts' movements, and who are now at Kimberley, the total prisoners at Simons Town and Wynberg amount to 628.

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS—GENERAL CRONJE.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what is the name of the ship upon which General Cronje and his family are imprisoned, and how long it is intended to keep them imprisoned on shipboard.

*MR. BRODRICK (for Mr. WYNDHAM): General Cronje and his family will be detained on board the flagship "Doris" I cannot at present say how long they will be kept there.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman see that as soon as possible General Cronje is provided with a suitable place ashore?

*MR. BRODRICK: That question will be dealt with by the military authorities on the spot.

MAGERSFONTEIN ENGAGEMENT—MISSING SEAFORTHS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a statement that Mr. Bisset, the owner of Magersfontein, was an eyewitness of the battle, and relates that a party of forty Seaforth Highlanders made their way through the Boer lines to the top of a kopje, where some of them were

subsequently killed, and others taken prisoners by General Cronje; and will he endeavour to ascertain whether Major Mackenzie, Seaforth Highlanders, who has been missing since the battle, was with this party.

*MR. BRODRICK (for Mr. WYNDHAM): I regret that it has not been possible up to the present to obtain definite information as to the fate of Major Mackenzie, or to add anything to the answer given to the hon. Member on the 13th ultimo concerning that officer.

PARCELS POSTAGE TO TROOPS AT THE FRONT.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, seeing that the gratuitous transport of private consignments of clothing and other articles to the British troops in South Africa does not guarantee delivery to the addressee, he will recommend a reduction in the parcels post rate to the field force of 9d. per lb., which in many cases is prohibitive.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): I understand that the Post Office has not the power, without fresh legislation, to reduce the rate of postage which it is its duty to collect, but the War Office is considering how far it may be possible, with the concurrence of the Treasury, to do something which would meet the wishes of the hon. Member. As, however, it is necessary that the Cape Post Office should also be consulted, it is not yet possible to announce a decision in the matter.

PAY OF AUSTRALIAN TROOPS AT THE FRONT.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Australian troops at the front are paid by the Imperial Government; and, if so, is the pay given to them more than the pay of the men in the Regular Army; and, if so, how much more.

*MR. BRODRICK (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The Australian troops at the front are paid by the Imperial Government at the same rates as the Regular forces.

AUSTRALIAN "BUSHMEN" CONTINGENT.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Imperial Government has applied to Australia for more troops; and, if so, will the cost, including pay of the men, be borne by the home Government.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The Australian Governments have been informed that Her Majesty's Government will be glad to have the services of 2,000 men similar to the "Bushmen" contingent, and all the costs, including the pay of the men, will be borne by this country. I may say that the request of Her Majesty's Government has been received gratefully and with enthusiasm.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: What will be the pay in this case?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is a question for the War Office.

PAGET'S HORSE.

MR. H. S. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the first and second sections of Paget's Horse have now been enrolled many weeks; that a large proportion of those forming part of these sections gave up their occupations in order to join the ranks; and that dissatisfaction exists at the delay and uncertainty as to their departure for the front. Whether he can state approximately the date of their departure; whether the War Office has handed over to the Imperial Yeomanry Committee the military arrangements, and what experience the members of that committee have had in organising and transporting large bodies of mounted troops; and will he state why the second section have not yet been furnished with rifles, and when they will be so armed.

*MR. BRODRICK (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The 51st Company Imperial Yeomanry will not be ready for embarkation till the 16th March, and will sail in the "Tagus" on that date. The 52nd Company is ready and will be despatched as soon as transports are available. The Yeomanry Committee have secured the assistance of experienced officers in regard to the

organisation and transport of the Yeomanry. As regards the rifles, the 52nd Company have not yet applied for them to the War Office.

MR. H. S. FOSTER: Have the War Office, as asked in the third paragraph, handed over the arrangements to the Imperial Yeomanry Committee?

*MR. BRODRICK: Certain arrangements have been handed over to the committee, and the experiment has so far been attended with great success.

OFFICERS AT THE FRONT—THE STAFF COLLEGE.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can state in what years respectively the following officers passed the final examination at the Staff College—namely, General Lord Roberts, General Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, General French, General Macdonald, and Colonel Lord Dundonald.

*MR. BRODRICK: None of the officers named passed through the Staff College.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: How does my right hon. friend explain their success?

*MR. BRODRICK: There is no law in the mind of the War Office which suggests that much learning maketh a man mad, but it is possible for a man to be successful even if he has passed through the Staff College.

ARMY ESTIMATES.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, before proceeding to discuss Vote A, Army Estimates, in Committee of Supply, a statement will be circulated to Members of the House showing the estimated number of Cavalry, Royal Reserve Battalions, Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers respectively to be provided for in the Estimates, under the head of temporary measures for increasing the number and efficiency of the forces in the United Kingdom, and more particularly described on page 4, sub-head (c), in the statement of the Secretary of State for War.

*MR. BRODRICK (for Mr. WYNDHAM): It is not proposed to furnish such a state-

ment. A full explanation of the measures will be given on the introduction of Army Estimates in Committee.

THE BLAKELY GUN.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that, as shown on page 551 of the Report of the Ordnance Select Committee, 1863, the Armstrong gun patented in 1858 embodies the principles contained in a patent taken out in 1855 by the late Captain T. A. Blakely, R.A.; and in view of the fact that the widow of this officer expended the greater part of her fortune in enabling her husband to bring to perfection, in the manufacture of heavy ordnance, a principle which was eventually adopted in guns manufactured for Her Majesty's Government, will he consider Mrs. Blakely's claim to be placed on the Civil List.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I answered a question of the same purport on 28th July, 1898.* I then informed the hon. Member for Norwood that, according to such inquiries as I had been able to make, Captain Blakely was one of several inventors who at about the same time had independently hit on somewhat similar methods of improving artillery. No guns made on Captain Blakely's design were ever introduced into the service, nor was expenditure incurred at the instigation of the British Government.

THE VOLUNTEERS—EASTER MANŒUVRES.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, as reported, the usual Easter Manœuvres are not to take place this year; whether he is aware that the London Volunteers look to the Easter training as the only period during the year in which some part of their military training can be carried out; whether he will inquire of the commanding officers of the London Volunteer battalions as to the advantages derived from this training; and whether, considering that these battalions contain many men who have recently joined, and the importance of giving the best training possible to the Volunteers this year, the War Office will reconsider their decision.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxi., p. 311.

*MR. BRODRICK (for Mr. WYNDHAM): There have been no manœuvres for some years, and there will be none at Easter, nor will there be any route marches. In lieu of this it is contemplated to extend the periods of Volunteer camps during this year.

MR. TOMLINSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman communicate with the commanding officers of London Volunteers with a view to have military manœuvres at Easter this year?

*MR. BRODRICK: I am afraid that the decision come to by the authorities cannot be varied this year.

COLCHESTER RIFLE RANGE.

MR. F. W. WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when the Colchester Rifle Range at Middlewick will be opened.

*MR. BRODRICK (for Mr. WYNDHAM): It is not possible to say when it will be opened. The range is all ready, and the purchase money has been paid into court, but a delay has arisen through a small legal difficulty which it is to be hoped will be shortly settled.

CLOSED RIFLE RANGES.

MR. F. W. WILSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the detailed Return of closed rifle ranges in the eastern district can be issued before Easter.

*MR. BRODRICK (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The Return was distributed to the House yesterday.

SOMALILAND TROUBLES.—AFRICAN NATIVE TROOPS.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War to what place the British Central African natives, lately in Mauritius and now said to be at sea, are going, and for what purpose.

*MR. BRODRICK (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The battalion is on its way to Somaliland, where local disorder has rendered its presence desirable.

NAVAL MANŒUVRES FOR 1899.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is intended to circulate any Report on the Naval Manœuvres of last year.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Yes, Sir.

DELAGOA BAY.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether negotiations are in progress between Her Majesty's Government and the Portuguese Government with a view to the acquisition by England of Delagoa Bay or some other port in Portuguese East Africa.

*MR. BRODRICK: No such negotiations are in progress.

DISTURBANCES AT MONTREAL.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the cause and extent of the disturbances in Montreal recently between French and English Canadians.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: These unfortunate riots appear to have been begun by students at McGill University on Tuesday last as a demonstration against the offices of French newspapers accused of anti-British feeling. Students of Laval University retaliated by pulling down the flag on the office of the *Star*, a British paper. Subsequently a mob took part in the rioting. A telegram received last night informs me that no further rioting has occurred.

ELECTRIC ENERGY BILLS.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in order to obtain a tribunal appointed on non-party lines, he is prepared to recommend that the Committee to whom the Electric Energy Bills are to be entrusted shall be exclusively nominated by the Committee of Selection.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. RITCHIE, Croydon): I think the House would act wisely if it referred these Bills to a Committee nominated as suggested in the question.

OFFICIAL RECEPTION OF POSTAL TRADES UNIONS.

MR. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if the announcement recently made in the

official document known as Registered No. 234, 768/99, is to be taken as a concession of the official recognition of Postal Trade Unions, and if so, will the Postmaster General enlarge, if necessary, such instructions on the subject which he may issue so as to provide for the reception of properly elected trade union representatives without qualification as is customary with private employers.

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is not aware of the precise meaning which is intended to be attached to the expression "official recognition." The Postmaster General is at all times ready to consider any representations made, whether collectively or individually, by persons in the employment of the Department, and it is not necessary for any person in order to obtain a hearing to associate himself either formally or informally with others. All classes of Post Office servants have full liberty to form themselves into associations for any legitimate purpose, and any representations from such bodies will be duly considered if conveyed through the usual official channels, provided that all those by whom or on whose behalf the representations are made are in the service of the Department, and that the questions raised are such as directly affect the whole body represented. The Postmaster General does not consider it necessary to issue any special instructions on the subject, nor to enlarge the statement contained in the official communication referred to by the hon. Member.

POSTAGE RATES FOR PERIODICALS AND MAGAZINES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it is his intention to remedy the disparity between the cost of postage of periodicals and magazines, published in this country at greater length of time than one week, and the ordinary newspapers; whether his attention has been called to the statement in the last report of the Postmaster General of New Zealand to the effect that a magazine post has been established in that colony, the rates of which are 1d. for the first 8 oz., and $\frac{1}{2}$ d. for each succeeding 4 oz.; and whether he can see his way to grant a similar concession to the people of this country.

MR. HANBURY: My hon. friend often sees similarity where none exists. Magazines differ from newspapers in so far as they do not contain news, in their greater weight, and in the longer intervals at which they appear. Books published at regular intervals might just as well be sent at the newspaper rate as magazines. My hon. friend too frequently changes his views as to the rates to be charged. He now suggests more than double the rate he proposed when he last asked the question. He is aware that there is already a loss on the newspaper post in this country, and that the postal authorities in the United States and in Canada complain that the development of postal facilities is strangled by the large deficits due to the cheap carriage of printed matter in those countries. For packets exceeding 2½lbs. in weight the parcel post in this country is already cheaper than the New Zealand magazine post.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that for the past fifteen years the Postmaster General has been promising reform on this matter?

MR. HANBURY: Yes, but I have shown that it would be exceedingly unwise to make any such reform.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES—INSANITARY DWELLINGS IN RURAL DISTRICTS.

MR. HAZELL (Leicester): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, seeing that since the passing of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, there has been only one case, that at Ixworth, in Suffolk, in which a rural local authority has taken action under Part 3 of the Act to improve the dwellings of the labourers in its district, and in view of the insanitary and overcrowded condition of such dwellings in many cases, as revealed in the Reports of the Assistant Agricultural Commissioners to the Royal Commission on Labour, the Board will consider the desirability of issuing a circular to all rural local authorities throughout the kingdom directing their attention to the powers and duties conferred upon them by that Act.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I introduced a Bill a few days since which, among other

things, would simplify the procedure for the adoption of Part III. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, in rural districts. I hope that it may become law during the session, and it would be more advisable, I think, to wait till then before issuing a circular to the local authorities again on this subject, which the Department has done already on a former occasion.

WORKHOUSE DIETARY REGULATIONS.

MR. HAZELL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can explain the causes of the delay on the part of his Department in issuing regulations based upon the recommendations of the Committee on Workhouse Dietaries in the year 1898; and whether he is able to name the date when such regulations will be issued.

MR. CHAPLIN: I am afraid there has been some delay in this matter, but it is not quite so simple as it might seem at first sight. The delay has been mainly caused by the great care that has been requisite in framing the model dietary scales which the Committee recommended should be issued. I am unable to name the date when the regulations will be ready, but they are being pressed forward, and there will be no avoidable delay in their issue.

COTTAGE HOMES BILL.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Government propose this session to introduce any Bill to carry out the recommendations in regard to the Poor Law unanimously made by the Select Committee appointed last session to consider the Cottage Homes Bill.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I beg at the same time to ask the President of the Local Government Board what steps, by order or otherwise, he proposes to take in order to carry out the recommendations contained in the Report of the Select Committee on the Cottage Homes Bill of last year, with reference to the treatment of the aged and deserving poor as regards indoor and outdoor relief.

MR. CHAPLIN: I will answer these questions together. I should be very

glad to introduce a Bill on the subject referred to if it is found to be practicable during this session. The matter is under consideration, but I am not able to give any more definite pledge on the subject at present.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to issue any instructions to the Board of Guardians?

MR. CHAPLIN: Well, Sir, I have said that I should be glad to introduce a Bill, and that the question was under consideration, and the hon. Member must, I think, be aware that any regulations I might make upon the subject must be dependent, in great measure, on the introduction and passing of a Bill.

STOURBRIDGE POOR LAW UNION AREA.

*MR. MARTIN (Worcestershire, Droitwich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the grounds upon which the Local Government Board propose to base their decision to divide the Stourbridge Poor Law Union into two parts; and if they have any reason for disregarding the expressed wishes of the union and its representatives; and, if so, if he will make that reason public.

MR. CHAPLIN: The workhouse accommodation of the Stourbridge Union is very unsatisfactory, and the Local Government Board have for many years past been urging on the guardians the necessity for its improvement. The union, however, is partly in Staffordshire and partly in Worcestershire, and the workhouse, which is situate almost at one end of the union, is not conveniently placed as regards many of the Worcestershire parishes, and a petition was presented to the Board from some of the guardians of the Worcestershire parishes and others, asking that unless a workhouse on a central site was erected the union might be divided. In 1897 the Board received a deputation on this question, and subsequently an exhaustive local inquiry was held with regard to it. In April last the Board informed the guardians that in their opinion the evidence taken at the inquiry clearly showed that a new workhouse should be built on a central site, and that failing such a site being obtained within a reason-

able time, they considered that the Worcestershire parishes should be formed into a separate union. A central site has not been obtained, and the Board have accordingly decided that a division of the union should take place.

BETHNAL GREEN INFIRMARY.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Board of Guardians of St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green, applied some months ago for sanction for the appointment and salaries of the nursing staff for the new Bethnal Green Infirmary, and that, although that institution is completed and ready to receive patients, and was formally opened yesterday, the sanction has not been accorded; and, if so, will he take immediate steps to comply with the request of the guardians.

MR. CHAPLIN: The Local Government Board have received the application referred to, and there has been considerable correspondence on the subject. The Board's decision in the matter has been communicated to the guardians. They have sanctioned the number of nurses required, and I hope that the matter may now be regarded as settled or far advanced towards settlement.

INEBRIATES ACT, 1898.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the remarks of the police magistrate at Westminster on 26th February, in the case of Margaret Devine, an habitual inebriate, to the effect that although the Inebriates Act of 1898 had been in force fourteen months there was no place to which he could send a female inebriate, and his statement that excluding Roman Catholics there were only fifteen women in homes, and that the Act was practically a dead letter; and if he would state how many persons, male and female, have been committed under the Act, and what steps are being taken to increase the accommodation for the class of cases with which the Act is intended to deal.

MR. HAZELL (Leicester): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that other magistrates are making the same complaint?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): If so, they are in the same case as the magistrate referred to in the question. I have seen a report of the remarks referred to, and I can only say that if it is accurate the magistrate is under a misapprehension as to the facts of the matter. And I regret that statements so inaccurate as those attributed to him should be circulated on apparently high authority. In reality, 100 females and two males have been committed to and received in certified reformatories, and of these fifty-nine are Protestants. Further accommodation is no doubt needed, and action is being taken by many local authorities with the view of providing it; but the arrangements necessarily take time. Perhaps the best account of the progress which is being made is given in a letter from the inspector under the Act which appeared in *The Times* on the 6th February. I have sent the hon. Baronet a copy.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONGRESS—CHILD LABOUR.

MR. GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the formal assent given by Her Majesty's Government in 1890 to the proposal made at the International Labour Congress, held in Berlin, that the age at which children might be permitted to work underground should be raised from twelve to fourteen, any steps have been taken by Her Majesty's Government to give effect to that proposal; and, if not, whether the Government contemplate legislation upon the subject during the current session; and whether he can state which Continental Powers represented at the Berlin Congress assented to the proposal, and what steps have been taken by them to give effect to their pledges.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: No steps have been taken in this country since 1890 in the direction of raising the age below which children may not work underground; and the Government does not contemplate legislation on the subject this session. The resolution of the Congress was, I think, practically unanimous; but as far as I can ascertain, France and Norway are the only countries where there has been legislation on the subject since 1890; and even in those countries

the employment underground of children of twelve years of age and upwards, though placed under restrictions, has not been actually prohibited.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Is it not the case that in France child labour under thirteen years of age is entirely prohibited? Will the Government give favourable consideration to a Bill raising the age to thirteen?

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I understand the right hon. Baronet has introduced a Bill extending the age to thirteen. Of course the Government will be prepared to give the Bill full consideration, and I dare say that it may be a favourable one, but I cannot pledge myself.

AVOCH (ROSS-SHIRE) FISHERY LOSSES.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland is aware that the storm of 18th February last resulted in a serious loss to the fishermen of Avoch, Ross-shire, nearly a dozen fishing boats being damaged against the pier, and eighty entirely destroyed; and, in view of this loss, will he consider the expediency of arranging for a grant-in-aid for a harbour at Avoch.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The Secretary for Scotland is aware that on 18th February, during a gale of exceptional violence, five boats were totally wrecked and five damaged in Avoch harbour. Avoch is not within the area falling under the administration of the Congested Districts Board, and the Secretary for Scotland cannot therefore hold out hope of a grant-in-aid. He is, moreover, informed by the Fishery Board that any effective improvement of the harbour would involve a large expenditure.

SCOTTISH DEER FOREST STATISTICS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state at what intervals assessors in Scotland require the proprietors of deer forests to furnish the acreage and other information which may be necessary for the purposes of valuation; and will he say what are the penalties attaching to proprietors for a misstatement of facts.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: As I have already explained to the hon.

Member, the acreage is not a factor in the valuation of a deer forest. The other information which may be necessary for the purposes of valuation is already required yearly. As regards the last portion of his question, I must refer the hon. Member to Section 7 of the Lands Valuation Act, 1854.

POULTRY BREEDING IN SCOTLAND.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, having regard to the fact that the Congested Districts Board, with a view to encourage and improve the breed of poultry, sent an expert last autumn to lecture in Sutherland and Caithness, will he state whether the Island of Lewis and the outlying congested districts in other crofting counties outside the line of railway will be visited at an early date; and will he say in what districts sittings of eggs have been distributed.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that they cannot at present say whether an expert will be sent, but they are considering how best to convey instruction to crofters in outlying districts. Sittings of eggs have been distributed—In Argyll: Coll and Mull; in Inverness: Barra, Duirinish, Harris, Kilmuir, and North Uist; in Ross: Gairloch, Lochs, and Ullapool; in Shetland: Cunningsburgh, Hillswick, Vaila and Whalsay.

IRISH POOR RATES AND SMALL TENANTS.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the difficulty there is in collecting the poor rate from tenants whose valuation is not more than £4 owing to the inability of such tenants to pay these rates, he will consider the advisability of levying these rates as before on the immediate landlords.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N., for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): I am not aware that any difficulty is experienced such as indicated in the question. The alteration in the law suggested would be entirely opposed to the principle on which the local Government Act was founded, namely, that the burden of the rates should fall on those to whom the electoral power is given.

CLARE MAIL SERVICE.

MAJOR JAMESON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware of the very late hours at which the morning mail arrives at Kilrush and Kilkee, County Clare; and will he take steps to see that the mails are made to keep their schedule time, which is 8 o'clock in the morning.

MR. HANBURY: The delay has occurred on the West Clare Railway, and representations on the subject have been addressed to the company, who have promised to take measures for improving the working of the service.

KILDYSART UNION—MR. P. K. HALLORAN.

MAJOR JAMESON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he explain why the Local Government Board have taken steps to remove Mr. P. K. O'Halloran from acting as district councillor on the council of the Kildysart Union, seeing that Mr. Halloran represents the Labour party in that district, for which he was elected by a large majority.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The Board have not taken steps to remove Mr. O'Halloran from the office of district councillor. His election as a representative of the Labour party would not, of course, disqualify him from acting as councillor, but it having been ascertained that he is a tenant of a labourer's cottage, held from the district council, the Local Government Board have expressed the opinion that, as such, he is disqualified by the provisions of Article 12, paragraph 4 (e) of the Application of Enactments Order from being a member of the district council to which he is tenant. The Board are about to obtain a judicial decision in order to test the validity of this opinion, and in the meantime no further proceedings will be taken against Mr. O'Halloran.

QUARANTINE REGULATIONS FOR DOGS LANDED IN GREAT BRITAIN FROM IRELAND.

DR. TANNER (Cork County, Mid): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in consequence of the recently introduced quarantine regulations between England and Ireland, sporting and show dogs are debarred from

being used for sporting purposes, competition in field trials, or for exhibition, entailing a monetary loss on owners of well-conducted kennels; and whether performing dogs are free from restrictions, and greyhounds are allowed to pass for the purposes of taking part in coursing meetings, while setters, pointers, and spaniels are excluded from taking part in field trial meetings. I beg also to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether cattle drovers and dealers are now prevented taking their dogs with them when crossing to England, thereby experiencing trouble in disembarking and managing the cattle; and whether, if the English Board of Agriculture considers it necessary to retain the quarantine regulations in any form, exemption will be granted to sporting, show, and cattle dealers' dogs, provided they are certified by the owner and by a duly qualified veterinary surgeon not to be suffering from rabies and not to have been exposed to any risk of contagion for a period of three months, and that in these cases a licence without any restrictions be granted.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): In reply to these questions I would say that in view of the fact that rabies continues to exist in Ireland, whilst it may be said to be practically extinguished in Great Britain, I felt it necessary to impose restrictions on the landing of dogs brought from Ireland until such time as the disease may have been stamped out there. The restrictions have been somewhat relaxed in a few cases of performing dogs and greyhounds where we were satisfied that a concession could safely be made, but it would not be practicable to extend a similar relaxation to so large a class of dogs as that referred to without serious risk of the reintroduction of the disease—a result which, after all we have gone through to secure our present most satisfactory position, I am sure the House would wish me to take every possible means to avoid.

DR. TANNER: May I ask if the reason why performing dogs are exempted is simply because they are English?

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Cannot the right hon. Gentleman see his way to allow drovers' dogs, which are almost necessary to the Irish cattle trade, to be relieved of these restrictions?

*MR. LONG: I have carefully considered that point, and I think that these restrictions are necessary, because, in all probability, greater risks attach to drovers' dogs than to other animals.

MR. T. M. HEALY: There were fifty Italian dogs in Dublin last week or the week before.

PORTADOWN RIOTS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is now in a position to state the cause, and effect on the property of Roman Catholics in Portadown, of the Orange riot which took place there in celebration of the relief of Ladysmith on Wednesday last.

MR. ATKINSON: The streets of Portadown, like those of other towns in Ulster, were the scene of considerable enthusiasm and excitement when it became known on Wednesday last that Ladysmith had been relieved. It is much to be regretted, however, that amongst the crowds of loyalists who assembled on the occasion in Portadown, there were, unfortunately, a number of persons, mainly boys, who indulged in stone-throwing and breaking the windows in houses the property of Roman Catholics. Windows in the houses of Protestants were afterwards broken by Roman Catholics. The extent of damage done to the houses of Roman Catholics was about £10. No person, I am happy to say, was injured on the occasion, and the respectable inhabitants of the town, in order to mark their disapproval of the reprehensible conduct of these individuals, intend, so I am informed, to have the damage done to windows repaired at their own expense. For some years past every celebration in Portadown has passed off without unpleasant incident. Some eight or nine of the persons who threw the stones on this occasion have been identified, and will be rigorously proceeded against by the police.

RIOTING IN BELFAST.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, in view of the recent behaviour of Orange mobs in Belfast, who did damage to Roman Catholic property under cover of celebrations for the relief of Ladysmith, what provision has been

made to protect the Roman Catholic inhabitants from still further injury in the event of other victories being gained over the Boers; has it come to his knowledge that, in the recent occurrences, the premises of over twenty-five Roman Catholic traders were damaged, the schools of the Christian Brothers attacked, and an assault made on St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church when the congregation was leaving after evening Lenten devotions; and, in future, will the police be permitted to disperse riotous mobs appearing in the streets of Belfast.

MR. ATKINSON: There is no foundation whatever for the suggestion that the disturbances in Belfast on Wednesday last were participated in by Orange or riotous mobs under cover of celebrations for the relief of Ladysmith. I have already stated, in answer to a question of the hon. Member for Mid Cork, that the regrettable and reprehensible occurrences of Wednesday were the work of a few individuals only out of the many thousands of loyal citizens of all classes who paraded the streets on the occasion in a perfectly peaceable and orderly manner. The police of Belfast are fully alive to their duty in preserving the public peace, and this duty they will continue to perform notwithstanding the difficulties which they may have to encounter and irrespective of who may be the aggressors.

DR. TANNER: Arising out of the answer, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman if it is not the fact that these outrages have also occurred on occasions like the defeat of Stormberg, and can he give any assurance that at times when news comes of either a defeat or a victory, due protection will be afforded to the property of Catholics?

MR. ATKINSON: I am not aware of any riots on the occasion of the alleged defeats, but, of course, the police will be proper protection in all cases.

DR. TANNER: At the time the three generals were defeated the same thing occurred.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

DEATHS IN MOUNTJOY PRISON— CASE OF THOMAS CASEY.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he has seen the verdict of a

coroner's jury in the case of a life convict named Thomas Casey, who died of pulmonary tuberculosis in Mountjoy prison on Wednesday last, in which a strong opinion is expressed that the man, when found to be hopelessly ill, should have been released; whether he can say when the disease of which Casey died was first diagnosed by the medical officer, and in what prison; is it usual to remove prisoners suffering from this and other serious diseases to Maryborough prison, where the system is less severe and more suitable to invalids than Mountjoy; was Casey in Maryborough prison; why was he sent there, and when; and why was he taken back to Mountjoy, and when.

DR. TANNER: I beg at the same time to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been directed to the report of the inquest on the prisoner John Casey in Mountjoy prison, on Wednesday, 28th February ultimo, at what time was it discovered that he was suffering from tuberculosis of the lungs; will he explain why, when Dr. O'Keefe stated that the case was hopeless, Casey was not discharged; and, if a similar case should occur in Ireland, if the authorities will take steps to offer the prisoner his liberty directly.

MR. ATKINSON: My attention has been directed to the verdict of the coroner's jury in the case of John Casey, lately a convict in Mountjoy prison. The deceased suffered from chronic phthisis since the year 1886, when he was confined in Downpatrick prison. In the same year he was removed to Maryborough invalid prison, where he remained until about eighteen months ago, when, owing to structural alterations in that prison, it became necessary to remove him to Mountjoy prison. In both of these prisons he was classed as a hospital patient, and treated accordingly. His case was under consideration in October, 1897, and October, 1898, and again so recently as October, 1899, but on neither of these occasions was there any reason for exceptional treatment of his case by the exercise of the prerogative of mercy. On the 19th January of this year the prisoner's disease suddenly and unexpectedly became acute, and his case was at once brought under the notice of the Lord Lieutenant, who gave directions that every care should be taken of the man, and that Dr. Wodehouse, the

medical member of the Prisons Board, should have full discretion as to his treatment. Dr. Wodehouse frequently saw the deceased since the 19th January, but the man was never since that date fit for removal or discharge, and on his being asked whether in the event of his illness taking a favourable turn he would wish to be transferred to a hospital outside, Casey replied that he would not unless he was likely to recover.

DR. TANNER: May I ask how it comes to pass that the opinion of Dr. Wodehouse is now quoted. Is it not the case that Dr. O'Keefe, the medical officer in charge of the prison, a most capable and extremely humane gentleman, diagnosed this case, and why was his report withheld, and only obtained eventually by putting a question in this House?

MR. ATKINSON: I am not responsible for the conduct of the proceedings.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is it a fact that this man was over seventeen years in prison, and is it not usual, in cases of sickness which threaten to result in death, to at once release the prisoner?

MR. ATKINSON: The moment sickness threatens loss of life, the question of discharge is considered. As I have explained, it was not until 19th January that this man's case appeared serious.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: How many prisoners have died recently in Mountjoy prison?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the question on the Paper.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is not this the man for whose release Lord Randolph Churchill and Sir Edward Clarke both voted some years ago?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not entitled to ask that question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Surely I am entitled to ask whether this man has been dying for many years, and why he was not released?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to ask an argumentative question.

DR. TANNER: I shall put further questions on this.

THE PATRIOTIC FUND COMMISSION.

MR. HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Committee appointed, under the presidency of Lord Justice Henn Collins, to inquire into the administration of the various funds administered by the Patriotic Commissioners and others has arranged to hold its sittings in the evening, namely, from half-past four until half-past six o'clock; whether such hours are customary; and whether they have been selected to meet the convenience of those who will be invited to attend and offer evidence, or whether they have been arranged to suit the professional and other engagements of the Committee itself.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Every Committee regulates its own hours of meeting according to its own discretion. I understand the Committee in question is to meet at four o'clock. Of course, I have no control over their proceedings nor any power of criticising it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask whether any protest has been made by the English Bar Committee against the withdrawal of Lord Justice Collins from his judicial duties to preside over a packed Committee of this kind?

[No answer was given.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman what the business will be on Thursday and Friday, and also next week?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to Thursday, I propose to take, first, the report of the Budget resolutions and the First Reading of the Finance Bill, if we are not fortunate enough to get these to-morrow.

AN HON. MEMBER: To-morrow?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; after half-past five they might easily come on. Any hon. Gentleman can object if he likes.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I shall object.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall put down second the Soldiers' Enfranchisement Bill, and then the Navy Estimates, Votes 8 to 12. On Friday I shall continue the Navy Estimates, and on Monday I hope to get the Speaker out of the chair on the Army Estimates.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the Soldiers' Enfranchisement Bill. Do the Government intend that it shall include soldiers who are now excluded by the terms of their service?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I referred to the Electoral Disabilities (Military Service) Bill, the nature of which no doubt the hon. Member is acquainted with. I was not intending to describe the provisions of the measure, but only to indicate when it would be taken.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—NEWS FROM THE FRONT.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): May I ask if the report in the papers that General Buller has stated that Natal is quite clear of Boers is correct? Can the First Lord give us any information?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No telegram has reached the War Office later than that already known to hon. Members. I think I should be given notice of a question like this.

NEW BILLS.

PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS.

Bill to provide for the better organisation of Professional Accountants, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Schwann, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. John Wilson (Govan), Mr. J. H. M. Campbell, and Mr. William Field.

PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS BILL.

"To provide for the better organisation of Professional Accountants," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 112.]

TEINDS (SCOTLAND).

Bill to amend the Law of Teinds, and to provide for the stated conversion of Fiar's Prices in certain cases in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Nicol,

Mr. Renshaw, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael, Mr. Gordon, Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Mr. Robert Wallace (Perth), Mr. Alexander Cross, and Sir Walter Thorburn.

TEINDS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law of Teinds, and to provide for the stated conversion of Fiar's Prices in certain cases in Scotland," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, May 18th, and to be printed. [Bill 113.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

WAR LOAN.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "(1) That towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st day of March, nineteen hundred, and the 31st day of March, nineteen hundred and one, sums not exceeding thirty-five million pounds be raised by either or both of the following methods:—

- (a) By means of the creation of stock or bonds to be redeemed within a period not exceeding ten years, and bearing interest at a rate to be fixed by the Treasury; or
- (b) By means of the issue of Treasury bills;

and that the principal and the interest on any money so raised be charged on the Consolidated Fund.

"(2) That all expenses incurred in connection with raising the said sums, including any additional remuneration to the Banks of England and Ireland, be charged on the Consolidated Fund."—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): Though I do not rise for the purpose of offering any opposition to this resolution, I think the House must be aware that it is about as serious a financial motion as could be presented to the House of Commons. It is now half a century since so large an addition was proposed to the debt of this

country. For nearly fifty years we have been occupied in a process much more satisfactory to the country—namely, in reducing the debt, and in reducing the interest upon that debt. I know that as to any particulars of the provision to be made for this loan they will more properly belong to the discussion upon the Bill; but I do not think that, even in the initial stage of proposing to add £35,000,000 to the Debt of the country—to which, indeed, you have to add £8,000,000 raised in the last session of Parliament, though not within this resolution—you should leave out of consideration the fact that you are suspending also—and of that I do not complain—the Sinking Fund by which the old Debt would have been reduced to the amount of £5,000,000; so that, in point of fact, you are really dealing with the question of increasing the Debt of the country by a sum of nearly £50,000,000 sterling. We have heard, I am sure, with approval in sentiment and admiration in expression the financial doctrines preached by the Chancellor of the Exchequer last night. He appealed to the patriotism of the House and of the country not to rely simply upon loans for dealing with the necessities of this war. He reminded us of the sacrifices that were made by our fathers before us in the great French war, and afterwards in the Crimean War. No doubt those sacrifices were great. We had an income tax in the great war of 2s. in the £. We had an income tax in the Crimean War, with large other additions to taxation, of 1s. 4d. in the £. I referred briefly last night to what was the result of dealing with the expenses of that war. The Crimean War cost £76,000,000, but only £32,000,000 was added to the Debt of the country, as against the £48,000,000 now already contemplated in the case of the present war. Even supposing the expenditure is not larger than is now contemplated, we are already committed to an expenditure of—I don't know what, but at all events not less than £65,000,000. How much more it will be no man can say. If you get off with £76,000,000 as the cost of this war you may consider yourselves extremely fortunate. But in the Crimean War, which cost £76,000,000, there were £40,000,000 raised out of taxation, and only £32,000,000 by addition to the Debt. The fact was that

taxation so increased the balances that it reduced the added Debt to £32,000,000. The doctrine of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is an admirable one, but it has happened to the right hon. Gentleman and to other Chancellors of the Exchequer that their practice does not always come up to the standard of their doctrine. What is the situation now? The provision we have to make is not for £76,000,000, as in the Crimean War, but for £60,000,000 odd, and the provision we are going to make for this war out of taxation is £12,000,000 out of this smaller total, as against £41,000,000 so raised for the Crimean War, and the Debt is to be increased from that smaller sum by £48,000,000, instead of being increased as it was at that time by £32,000,000. Well, I am afraid that may be described as financial degeneracy. What is the situation? As the right hon. Gentleman very graphically and eloquently told us, since that time there has been a vast increase in the wealth of this country, an enormous increase in income, capital, and population. The right hon. Gentleman said he did not care for unpopularity, but if to attempt the exertions of which our fathers were capable leads to unpopularity it does not indicate a very wholesome state of the public opinion of this country. The sacrifices made fifty years ago in the Crimean War, by a people much less rich and much less capable of bearing taxation than we are to-day, amounted to more than one-half of the sum that had to be met, while that which we now think it possible to call upon the people to pay amounts to one-fifth of the sum that has to be met. There is, I believe, a popular melody very much recited with enthusiasm in the metropolis. It is what may be called, I think, a music-hall ballad, the refrain of which is "Pay, pay, pay." But I am afraid that does not express the real sentiment of the people. The persons who sing the song with the greatest gusto really mean "Borrow, borrow, borrow." Though the precepts of the Chancellor of the Exchequer are faultless, I cannot pay him an equal compliment on the scheme he has founded upon them. At all events, if I have to criticise that which is, perhaps, rather the fault of the people for whom he has to provide than his own fault, I do rejoice in the gallant stand which he has made

for the existing financial system of this country—a system so sound and beneficial that he was enabled to announce a wonderful financial result in the Revenue, of which the country would have enjoyed the benefit but for this war. That system, which was begun by Sir Robert Peel and continued by Mr. Gladstone, and which is the inheritance of their successors, has been the source of the splendid financial harvests which the right hon. Gentleman has had the good fortune to reap in his surpluses year after year. I have heard with satisfaction of the great increase which has been made on the death duties. Of course we all regret very much the loss of the estimable gentleman to whom the right hon. Gentleman referred last night, who lived upon 15s. a day, and bequeathed to the country on his decease nearly a million of money. At least it can be said of him that, if he did not live like a lord, at all events he died like a gentleman. I know that all lords do not do the same. There are occasions on which people take measures to defeat the Exchequer; and indeed there are traders, of whom the right hon. Gentleman complained, who also indulge in such practices. There is a ballad well known, I should say, to most hon. Gentlemen, in that admirable publication, "The Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin." I refer to a poem entitled, "Chevy Chase." It begins "Duke Smithson of Northumberland," and goes on to describe his immense property and how he succeeded in preventing the Exchequer obtaining its due. Of course, Dukes in the present day are incapable of such devices. With regard to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman as to the way in which the trade rush in on the days previous to the Budget, may I throw out a suggestion to him for his consideration? We have succeeded in the case of the death duties in preventing evasion to a considerable extent by making it impossible during a certain period before death to defeat the revenue. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether or not by some sort of retrospective action he could not prevent the evasion of the customs and excise duties. If he could see his way to do that he would have at least my support. It is a satisfaction to know that we have no cause to fear, in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, any departure from the established framework and skeleton of the finance of this

country. I heard him with great satisfaction denounce the theories put forward in an intelligent journal of the present day. We are invited to reform our finance upon the model of the worst period of the early part of this century—a sort of Budget that Mr. Vansittart might have produced. We have outlived all that. I was extremely happy to hear the language of the right hon. Gentleman upon that subject. I will only refer in one sentence to what the right hon. Gentleman said with reference to the relative allotment between direct and indirect taxation. I do not, however, concur in those remarks; but I will reserve what has to be said upon that subject until we come to the Finance Bill. I do not believe that the resources of direct taxation are exhausted; and, in my opinion, at the rate we are going, we shall have to make great demands upon all forms of taxation—much larger demands than those that are made to-day. What is the scope of this loan bill? I agree very much that it would not be advisable to raise anything like this sum of money upon Treasury bills or floating debt. We should have to pay pretty smartly for Treasury bills. We had to pay for the last issue, which was not a very large one, not far short of 4 per cent. on some of them. [An HON. MEMBER: Four and a half.] Four and a half per cent.? That is not a pleasant prospect to people who are now accustomed to 2½ per cent., and nobody knows what may be the market price of the securities that will have to be offered. I do not venture to offer any opinion upon the subject.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): That was in January.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: But you never know what it may be in June. But I offer no opinion upon the subject. Of course the Treasury has means of information which no one else possesses. When you endeavour to obtain information as to matters of this kind I have always observed that the experts of the City are admirable authorities for twenty-four hours, but if you endeavour to extend your vision beyond that I do not find that they know much more about it than anybody else. That is my experience, at least, of what you may call high City authorities. I am sure the right hon.

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Gentleman will do what is best for the country, and make the best bargain he can. I quite understand why he does not wish to commit himself with regard to the exact form in which he will raise this money. I am happy to see in the resolution that this loan is to be redeemed within ten years, whether it is raised by Exchequer bonds or in some other form. But we may take it, at all events, that this is to be a short loan, to be redeemed within a limited time. I think that is a great improvement upon the practice of raising a loan and allowing it to be lost in the mass of Consols, because it ear-marks the loan, it reminds the country that this is a war loan, and I hope that in better days it will lead to the liquidation of the loan, which, perhaps, would not take place if it was hid away in the mass of Consols. The right hon. Gentleman refers to "bonds." I suppose he means Exchequer bonds.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Not necessarily Exchequer bonds.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Exchequer bonds have not been popular securities, but the right hon. Gentleman may mean bonds of other kinds; I do not know what is in his mind. Exchequer bonds have generally been in large sums, and you cannot have a general market for them as you could have in stock of any kind. But I understand the right hon. Gentleman contemplates the possibility of having what is known on the Continent as a popular loan, which is to be raised from the people at large. At the time of the Crimean War that idea was rejected for what was considered to be a good reason—namely, that it might affect the Savings Bank deposits, and so operate prejudicially upon the market of Consols. I do not know that the circumstances of the present day militate against such an experiment, which certainly everybody would watch with much interest. What is much more important, however, is how is this loan to be discharged? The Chancellor of the Exchequer has held out to us the pleasant prospect of an early peace. I hope he is not too sanguine. There is no man but will pray for an early cessation of this terrible war, not only on account of the immense waste of treasure, but still more the terrible effusion of blood. But supposing the right hon. Gentleman's expectation is well founded, let us

see what he proposes to do. I understand that though this resolution talks of redeeming the Debt, he does not make any proposal at present as to the method by which it is to be redeemed. I can understand that, and I agree, because Mr. Pitt's financial genius, which in the early period of his administration I think the right hon. Gentleman criticised very well, was still more defective in his latter administration, for he created a sinking fund which was an admirable moral principle; but unfortunately his sinking fund was provided for by more borrowing, so that it turned out to be a very unsuccessful operation. No sinking fund, of course, is of any value unless it is derived from surplus revenue. Raising more revenue than your expenditure is the only sound financial basis of a sinking fund. I think the right hon. Gentleman was quite right in saying, "It would be absurd for me to propose a sinking fund when I am borrowing money." That is obviously the fact. But we must not lose sight of the pledge which this resolution gives, that the loan is to be redeemed within ten years. Let us reflect, at all events, upon what is the probability of that being done in the financial circumstances in which we find ourselves. The characteristic of former great wars—of the great French war and of the Crimean War—was that there was a well-grounded confidence that when the wars were over a period of peace would arrive, and that expenditure, instead of increasing, would diminish. Have you that prospect now? What is your faith and expectation that when you have made peace in September the expenditure of the country will be reduced? That is a main condition in the prospect of redeeming the debt you are creating. After the great French war the people were exhausted, they had learned what the cost of war was, and there was a determination to reduce establishments and to cultivate economy. There was then tranquillity for fifty years. After the Crimean War the same thing took place. For a time, at least, after the great struggle with Russia was over and peace was restored there was a demand at once for a reduction of expenditure. A statesman who will carry great weight with Gentlemen opposite immediately after the Crimean War declared that the first duty was that expenditure should be diminished. In 1856 Mr. Disraeli took

occasion to impress on the Government the importance of giving their best attention to measures of wise, and at the same time rigid, economy. He said—*

"I am convinced that this is the only spirit in which we can confirm the principles of finance upon which our system is now generally established, and that will enable us to prepare those resources for the future which, whenever an emergency arises, will enable us to show the same power we have recently displayed."

He pointed out the mistake of supposing that the mischances and disappointments which had marked the commencement of the late war would be prevented on a future occasion by the maintenance during peace of an army much larger than the needs of the country required, and the only result that we should reap from the support of unduly large military establishments in times of peace would probably be that we should enter upon another struggle without those reserves which, having been accumulated by the wise economy of former years, had enabled the country to face its recent difficulties with comparative ease. That was the Tory doctrine of those days, and I should add one other sentence from the same authority, in which, speaking a few years later on a resolution that the war taxation should be reduced, he laid it down that "we should in the most significant manner express our opinion that it is not advisable that England should become what is called a great military nation." Those are the sentiments of fifty years ago. They met taxation, they cultivated economy. When peace came then they reduced the expenditure. Is that your prospect now? What is the judgment that is passed on the Crimean War and upon the expenditure on that war? Only a year or two ago, reviewing that history and that contest, the Prime Minister said that we had put our money on the wrong horse. Seventy-six millions of the taxation of the people of this country was put upon the wrong horse. I am not quite certain that after the experience of some years we shall be certain that we have put their £60,000,000 on the right horse. I am old enough to remember the fervour with which the people entered upon that expenditure on the wrong horse in the case

*See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Third Series], Vol. cxlii., page 362.

of the Crimean War. What do they think of it now? Since that period, and in consequence of that war, the people of this country have been more or less sober, and for nearly half a century we have had peace. God grant that the result of this present conflict may be similar to that. I believe even after all the passion and excitement which attaches to a war, that when the war is over there will be a sobering effect, produced on the national mind. That effect has been operative after the two great wars of the last century. Since that time we have, I believe, liquidated nearly £200,000,000 of debt; but at present what is your prospect of the reduction of debt or of the reduction of taxation? The right hon. Gentleman has held out an expectation—I daresay he believes it—that the £12,500,000 of taxation which he is about to put on the people this session will cease with the conclusion of peace. I wish I could feel confident of that. Looking at the rate at which our Estimates increase every year I doubt very much whether this will not be permanent taxation. More than that. I see nothing, at all events, in the temper of these times that points to diminished expenditure. On the contrary, the result of all wars, wars here and on the Continent, has been a large increase of military establishments throughout the world, and certainly all the demands of the present day are in that direction. No, Sir, economy such as was spoken of by Mr. Disraeli does not belong to the temper of the times—I do not mean the newspaper—but of the times in which we live. Everything seems to be in this direction—greater expenditure but less taxation. What is the result of these two desires on the part of the people? Every demand in favour of expenditure is received with alacrity, but when it is a question of raising the taxation upon the wealth of the people to meet that expenditure, then there is no man in greater difficulties than a Chancellor of the Exchequer. That is the prospect which you have before you, and when in this Resolution you speak of redeeming the Debt, I hope, at all events, in the House of Commons and by those people who can influence the judgment of the country the seriousness of the financial situation will be fully recognised. Everywhere I see a disposition to spend more and to pay less. That may be called the fashionable doctrine at the end of the

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century to which we belong. I take note, however, of the pledge of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it is to be sincerely hoped that he may long occupy the position he now fills. I hope and believe in his firmness and ability: I have confidence in both, and that he will redeem that pledge. The debt necessarily belongs to the future, and it is that future which, if we have any qualities of statesmen in the House, we are bound to look at. It is not the fashion of to-day; it concerns not the fortunes of the nation to-day, but the fortunes of the people hereafter. Those who went before us have made provision for those who came after them, and we are bound to do the same. Though I call attention to these matters I do not belong, myself, to the noble army of panic-mongers. I was extremely happy to hear in the House, which has charge of the finances of the country, that these panic-stricken doctrines were repudiated by the leaders on both sides. It was a matter of great importance, because there is no condition in which people lose their heads so much as when they are in a state of panic. They do strange things under those circumstances, but I hope that here, at least, we shall keep our heads, and that we shall do what we can to resist a policy which leads to vast expenditure, which is that spirit which the Prime Minister described as proposing “to fight everybody in order to take everything.” We have had a little taste of what a little war in a little part of your Empire will cost you. It costs you £60,000,000, and perhaps a great deal more. It will cost you as much as it did to fight Russia fifty years ago; and these are things which ultimately—I do not say to-day—will give the English people pause, and lead them to think that perhaps, after all, they have as much to take care of as they can afford to discharge. This will be a very valuable after-thought if it should arise out of this war. When people get alarmed they even begin to hint at conscription. When we have got aggravated debt, and we add to it conscription, then indeed the twentieth century will not be an improvement upon the century which preceded it. If you want to strike a blow at the industry of this country, if you desire to destroy your finance, then “conscribe” your people. Of all financial operations I should say that was the most disastrous. The right hon. Gentleman has held out to us a prospect with refer-

ence to the redemption of this debt. I am not sure that the right hon. Gentleman was able to give us much enlightenment on that subject last night, but his disposition is admirable. He thinks that the greater part of this debt is to come from the sources which are a main factor in the production of this war. I admit at this moment it is premature to determine how that is to be done until you get control of the Transvaal. I was highly satisfied with that pledge, and I say again, "Long life to the Chancellor of the Exchequer!" that he may redeem the pledge. There are difficulties about it, and I am not sure that anyone will envy him the task that will fall upon him. But there is an old proverb which says that it is a difficult thing to get a bone out of the mouth of a dog; and whether he will succeed in extracting this money out of the gold diggings in the Transvaal, I cannot say. But I was extremely glad to observe for his encouragement that his remark on that subject seemed to receive approbation from both sides of the House, and, therefore, I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who in his own mind is well disposed on the subject, will feel that he has general support in making those pay who ought to pay. On that subject I would venture to express an opinion which I hope may commend itself to the House and to the country. This £30,000,000 which it is contemplated to raise by a loan is not too great a contribution within the ten years to which it is limited to expect from the Transvaal. That would be about half the expense of the war. We are about to bear a taxation of £12,000,000 this year, and, as I have said, I believe it will be a very long time before we get rid of that taxation. But with regard to this loan which is limited to ten years, I can see nothing unjust or unfair in expecting that it should be raised upon the wealth of the people in the Transvaal. We have had them promising their shareholders £4,000,000 a year out of the savings to be effected as the result of the war. Why are the English taxpayers to pay £60,000,000 in order to raise the price of these shares on the Stock Exchange? They have not concealed their object at all. They have discounted all this money, and have announced that the result of this war will be the enhancement of the value of their shares, and they have esti-

mated that enhancement of value at millions of pounds sterling. The right hon. Gentleman is not in a position to deal with the question to-night, but we ought to make that a condition of the loan, which is to be redeemed within ten years. I have not entered upon this discussion at all in an alarmist spirit. I believe in the enormous and inexhaustible wealth of this country, because I have had experience of it. The deeper you drive into this reef the more gold you find. My hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn predicted in 1899 that we should not get anything from the death duties. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer observed that I should be astonished at their yield; and so I was. The resources of this country, if they are only handled prudently, are really inexhaustible. But, I say, let them be handled for the benefit of the people. Do not let them be frittered away. How many plans of reform have been swept away by the war? How many of these plans are to be paralysed and destroyed for years to come by the debt you are incurring to-day and the taxes you are imposing? I say you are diminishing in that way resources that ought to be administered for the advantage of the people at large. I hope I shall be excused for having so imperfectly called the attention of the House and the country to the perils that may be before them in the future in the adoption of unsound principles of finance.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for the references to myself which he has been good enough to make, and I do not rise, I assure him, to comment in any hostile manner on the observations he has made. But I really fail to see the precise motive of his speech.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It was not addressed to you.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The right hon. Gentleman looks upon me as a worthy and well-meaning person who belongs to a party which has thwarted all his efforts.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I was not talking of parties.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That, at any rate, is what I gathered from the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. He

ended his speech with a very eloquent sentence, in which he prophesied all sorts of evils: that magnificent plans of reform would be paralysed; that the country would be ruined by increase of taxation, and all the rest of it. But why? Because of the increased expenditure which he foresees as a result of the debt we are about to incur.

***SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT:** I meant a good deal more than the debt of to-day. I meant the spread of expenditure in the future in naval and military establishments, and in other things.

***SIR M. HICKS BEACH:** I am sure anyone in my position would thank the right hon. Gentleman for all the support that he could give him to resist any unnecessary expenditure. He is quite right in saying that these demands for increased expenditure come not from one side of the House alone, but generally from the nation at large; and though in many cases the increased expenditure we have seen in recent years has been absolutely necessary—as, for instance, that for the naval defence of the country and also in other ways which I need not particularise—I should welcome any aid in checking the tendency to expenditure which makes the position of any Chancellor of the Exchequer one of extreme difficulty. But I wish to address myself to the particular situation in which we now find ourselves, and the particular matter actually before the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to assume that I was struggling at the present moment against this great difficulty—that though I had, in a manner for which he was good enough to commend me, proposed that a very considerable portion of this war expenditure should be met by increased taxation, yet that I was met by a sort of feeling—I think the right hon. Gentleman intimated it existed mainly on this side of the House—that there ought to be no such contribution from increased taxation, and that instead of “pay, pay, pay,” it should be “borrow, borrow, borrow.” I do not think the right hon. Gentleman was fair to those who sit on this side of the House. Anyone who listened to the debate last night, anyone who has observed the general comments to-day upon the proposals which I have ventured to place before the Committee—disagreeable as those proposals must necessarily be—will

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have seen that even with regard to the income tax, which, perhaps, is not likely to be a popular tax on this side of the House, there was a general feeling that we were bound to make provision by increased taxation for the necessities of the moment; and, therefore, it is not fair for the right hon. Gentleman to charge those who sit on this side of the House with a reluctance to make that provision.

***SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT:** I did not make the charge in regard to the other side of the House specially. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman has had time to read the London press.

***SIR M. HICKS BEACH:** Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to comment upon the object of the resolution before the Committee, and he said, “You are adding to the debt of the country a larger sum than has been added for a period of a hundred years,” or words to that effect.

***SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT:** I said for half a century since the Crimean War.

***SIR M. HICKS BEACH:** It is unquestionably a large sum. But the right hon. Gentleman appears to suggest that we should find it practically impossible to pay off that sum within the ten years named in the resolution on account of the increased expenditure which he foresees after the war. I ventured to call the attention of the Committee last night to this special fact—that the Estimates of expenditure and revenue for the year show that but for the war expenditure properly so-called the ordinary revenue of the year, without any increase of taxation, would yield a handsome surplus, notwithstanding that the ordinary Estimates of the year included £3,000,000 extra for the Army beyond the figure at which the Army Estimates stood in the year preceding, and also nearly a million extra for the Navy. No one can be better aware than I am that this expenditure is rising, and that it probably will rise, for I am sure the country at large is determined that our defences, at whatever cost, shall be in an adequate and a proper condition. The right hon. Gentleman referred to previous years, when—for instance, after the Crimean War—large reductions were made in expenditure, and economy was the order of the day. Well, there are two kinds of

economy. You may go too far in attempting to reduce your expenditure in these matters. Our ancestors went too far in that direction. I remember the result very well in 1885, when war was impending and when we had to throw away lavishly ten or eleven millions simply because the Navy was not in the condition in which everyone would wish the Navy of this country to be; and although when war is over war expenditure ought, of course, to cease, and would necessarily cease, yet I quite admit, and, indeed, we all feel, that the result of this war may be to show deficiencies in our military defences which will have to be remedied, even at the cost of increased Estimates in the future. But have we no hope of meeting this? Why, look at the increase of revenue during the last few years. There has been practically no increased taxation until the present year since the right hon. Gentleman added to the death duties in 1894. And yet the revenue has gone up by leaps and bounds beyond the expectation that anyone could entertain. Our expenditure has enormously increased, but so has our revenue. And why? I would venture to give the Committee two reasons. In the first place, I agree with the right hon. Gentleman, it is because our revenue is derived under a sound fiscal system. If we were to adopt the plausible nostrums in regard to these matters which are constantly retailed all over the country by people who have sometimes, in my opinion, not quite adequately studied them, we should risk losing that enormously abounding and increasing revenue which we now enjoy. But there is another reason. However sound your fiscal system may be, a flourishing revenue is not likely to result unless you have rest from political agitation and contentment at home. You do not want a Government which is perpetually thinking of great constitutional changes, and that is another reason, and a not unimportant reason, for the improvement in the prosperity and trade of this country during the past five years.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Is it that which has given us this war?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The right hon. Gentleman thinks we shall not be able to pay off this debt; but in the very next breath he told us how, in his opinion, this debt ought to be paid off. He said, "You may fairly charge 30

millions on the Transvaal." I was delighted to hear it. I should like very much to charge 30 millions on the Transvaal, but the right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that neither I nor any other member of the Government can, in the present circumstances, say more than this—that we are as fully awake to the situation as any of our opponents or our friends. I do not know that I ought to have said anything in reply to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. But what he has shown to my mind is this—stick to our present fiscal system and we may rely upon our revenue to meet necessary expenditure. With regard to the Debt the right hon. Gentleman did not allude to the resources to which I referred last night, and to the fact that there were great terminable annuities coming to an end in 1902 and 1904—that is, six years before the ten years would expire—which would provide, together with the reduction of the interest on Consols, no less than five millions a year towards the redemption of any debt which we might incur.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: What does the right hon. Gentleman contemplate doing as regards the redemption of the debt after peace is concluded?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am not going to bind myself now as to what I will do on the termination of the war. I look first to the Transvaal. Then I look to the sources I have named, and, in one way or another, it will undoubtedly be my duty to provide for the redemption of this debt. I do not wish to detain the Committee further, but I would like to thank the right hon. Gentleman opposite for the suggestion he made with regard to a matter which has given me a good deal of trouble in the last few days—namely, the rush to clear goods from bond at existing rates of duty. I do not wish to say anything more on the subject than I said last night, but I do think that it is not to the interest of the public at large or of the revenue, or of anybody except the persons who wish to put money into their pockets which does not quite legitimately belong there, that this kind of practice should be allowed, and although it would be an entirely new proposal that the resolutions imposing taxation should be, so to speak, antedated two or three days before the date on which this House passes them, still, I certainly do propose to consider whether,

in some form or other, what has happened within the last two or three days may not be prevented on a future occasion.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Isle of Thanet): My right hon. friend was not unnaturally tempted by the somewhat comprehensive survey of financial arrangements by the right hon. Gentleman opposite to enter somewhat widely into his own opinion on financial matters. I think it is perfectly obvious that a considerable portion of the expenditure of this year and next year should be met by way of loan, but I certainly am not one of those who entertain the idea that the whole of that expenditure should be met in that way. The right hon. Gentleman is quite right in saying that the party on this side of the House is not inclined to advocate a policy of borrow, borrow, borrow. Any system of that kind is certainly not intended for times of peace, and I think it is quite right that those who are responsible for the conduct of affairs should, during their own time, make a substantial contribution towards the expenditure which they sanctioned. But as regards the particular doctrines which my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has just laid down, I undertake to say that they are by no means in harmony with the great mass of opinion in this country if he holds out no hope whatever of a more comprehensive view being taken of our financial position than that which he himself has adopted. Of course he was applauded by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire when he talked about adhering to our existing fiscal system, but I undertake to say that, far outside heretic circles like myself, the views of my right hon. friend are seriously controverted. I feel sure that many who do not go anything like the length I do as regards sound finance are not prepared to accept my right hon. friend's doctrine that our fiscal system is equal to the strain which at the present time it is called upon to meet. Looking even to the immediate future, is my right hon. friend prepared to say that the existing system of which he constitutes himself the main champion is capable of meeting any such strain? My right hon. friend knows perfectly well that it is not. I know it is the fashion to lay the blame for our financial stress entirely on the

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Army and Navy. I venture to say that the Civil Service Estimates are mainly responsible for the greater part of our financial stress. It may be said that old-fashioned sound finance was not intended to stand the strain of war, but how are times of peace spent nowadays? They are spent in adding item after item to the Civil Service Estimates. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman opposite is altogether blameless in that respect. He did not offer that strenuous resistance to the importunities of the Education Department during his tenure of office which we might have looked for from such a strict advocate of sound finance. The fact is that profligate expenditure all round is really popular in this country. In the old days, when the person who called the tune had also the privilege of paying the piper, things were somewhat different, but now the great mass of the taxpayers have only an infinitesimal interest in keeping down expenditure, and the result is that we find additions in times of profound peace to our expenditure. Then comes the stress of war, and what happens? The Chancellor of the Exchequer calmly says that our existing financial system is equal to the strain. I undertake to say that my right hon. friend differs from the great mass of people who have studied this question in any shape or form. He knows perfectly well that the bases on which our financial system rest are dangerously small and require to be deepened and widened. He knows that adding to the income tax and increasing other imposts is merely peddling finance. My right hon. friend on the present occasion had a great opportunity. What has he done? He has taken refuge in all the platitudes that he finds in the leaflets of the Cobden Club, and he has failed to grapple with a serious emergency with any approximation to what I venture to describe as statesmanship. I can quite imagine, when all parts of the country are united in a desire to bring the war to a successful determination, that it was undesirable to raise controversial issues. But my right hon. friend did not say that; he said that our existing fiscal system was one that we ought to adhere to for all time. I say that my right hon. friend has sorely disappointed the great mass of those who looked to him to steer us through this financial crisis. With all the respect which I entertain for my right hon. friend, I must realise that true

financial progress cannot possibly be made under his auspices. The fact is that until we all realise, as I think the bulk of the people are coming to realise, that the remedy is to be found in some wide departure from our existing system of finance, we will have a succession of these peddling Budgets which certainly reflect no credit on their authors. As regards this particular motion, I fail to understand in what form this loan is to be issued, although we are told the forms in which it may be issued. Something was said last night as to the desirability of supplying investors with some available security for their savings. I would ask my right hon. friend whether he can supply investors with some security not subject to the violent oscillations in the market from which all Government securities suffer at the present time. The most gambling stock quoted on the Stock Exchange during the last few years has been, not South African mines, but Consols. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told us that he had bought in the name of the nation Consols at 114, and they have been since quoted at 98½. If the stock were issued redeemable at par at option that would, I think, keep the security within reasonable limits, and it would not have a tendency to go much beyond or below par. That is a suggestion which persons experienced in financial matters regard as worthy of consideration. If the investor could have recourse to a security of this kind for money which he wishes to keep within call, and not find himself faced with a loss of 14 per cent. or a gambling gain, it would suit the more prudent class of investors. I think it would be perfectly possible to issue a stock of this sort. My right hon. friend yesterday referred to financial cowardice; I am bound to say that this Budget does exhibit a narrowness of resource and an incapacity to realise the realities of the situation which are really lamentable.

*SIR SAMUEL MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): I need only say a few words with regard to this Budget, because I find myself to a great extent in agreement with it. I must, however, express my disappointment that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not take this opportunity of imposing at least one new tax, and that is a tax on ground values in large towns. As he stated, all classes are expected to contribute to the expenses of the war, but here is a class which ex-

pected to be taxed a good many years before the war broke out, and although I am a holder myself I would be very pleased if the right hon. Gentleman had gratified the expectations of the owners of ground values. I think I ought to take this opportunity of thanking the Chancellor of the Exchequer for having put forward his financial statement at such an early period in the session, and I am very pleased that he has made ample provision for our known liabilities. Last year I joined with others in condemning on principle reducing the Sinking Fund in times of peace, but now that we have war I see no object in paying off debt in one direction while we are incurring debt in another. I cannot agree with my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouthshire in putting down the permanent addition to the Debt at £48,000,000. It can only be £43,000,000, as diverting the £5,000,000 of Sinking Fund cannot be regarded as a permanent addition to the national debt. I am also glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not limit the issue of Treasury Bills and that he has left himself perfectly free with regard to the form of the loan. There are in existence at the present time Treasury Bills to the value of 12½ millions, and if an additional 5 millions were issued the total would almost equal our floating debt in 1888-9. But the country has increased in prosperity since that time, and I think that the market would now stand 10 or 15 millions more of Treasury Bills. With regard to the form of the loan, in ordinary times I should doubt the possibility of placing 30 millions in the form proposed on reasonable terms. There is a similar kind of security at present on the market. The Indian railways issue bonds which now amount to about 16½ millions, the market is very full of them, and no further large amount would be readily absorbed. Bankers, of course, like to keep their reserves in securities that can be readily realised in times of panic or great pressure. I have, however, obtained information from competent judges in the matter, and I am assured that at the present time the feeling is so strong in favour of subscribing to the loan that almost any form of security offered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be a success. I think it is very wise not to depend on the bankers to take up this loan, but to make it a popular loan, and I would ask

the right hon. Gentleman to give facilities throughout the United Kingdom, not only at banks, but also at post-offices, to enable small investors to take up £50 or £100. I do not think bonds of less than £50 should be issued, because they would interfere with the savings bank, but if the right hon. Gentleman issues bonds with coupons attached and offers facilities for getting them inscribed, I feel certain that a large amount will be taken up. I think also that the term of years might be left optional, if possible. Three years bonds would be very much in request in the City, and it cannot matter what the number of years is if the Chancellor of the Exchequer gets out the loan at about 3 per cent. and receives par value. I should like to know plainly what the right hon. Gentleman intends to do with regard to the contract stamp, as there appears to be a great deal of doubt in the matter.

*THE CHAIRMAN: It would be better to reserve discussion on that point until the resolution authorising it is reached.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I only desire to detain the Committee a few minutes on a special point regarding the form this loan ought to take. It is quite impossible for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to provide a security which will not fluctuate, but it is not a correct description of Consols to say, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet said, that they were the most gambling security on the market. With regard to the loan, my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer indicated last night that he wished to make it a popular loan, and that sentiment has been re-echoed by other hon. Members. I entirely agree with it, but it might be dangerous to make the loan too popular. If, for example, it appealed to savings Bank depositors to any large extent, the result would be that the Government would not get a single penny out of such subscriptions, as they would merely be cross entries. I therefore agree with what has fallen from the hon. Member for Whitechapel that the denomination of the bonds should not be too small. I think it should not be as low as £50, and that £100 would be quite low enough. That would be a security which would appeal to the public without going so far down as Savings Bank depositors. I understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to

Mr. Samuel Montagu.

say that the duration of the loan would be ten years. I would suggest to him an improvement on that which would not infringe his principle. There was a well-known security in this country several years ago which was issued by the United States and was known on the market as the "five-twenties" and "ten-forties." The "five-twenties" bond was a bond redeemable at the option of the Government at the end of five years, but not necessarily redeemable for twenty years. That is an option which might be exceedingly valuable to the Government. I observe that there is a great deal of discussion as to the possibility of fixing a loan on the two South African Republics, especially the Transvaal. I think it is rather premature to discuss that question now; it is very much like selling the bear's skin before the bear is caught. However that may be, if the war is brought to a successful conclusion, and we are in a position to impose a burden on the Transvaal, that burden can be borne by that country to a larger extent than was indicated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, when he said, rightly and properly, that the capitalists should be made to contribute towards the war. There is an enormous reserve fund in the Transvaal as it stands to-day. The country has been administered at a cost of 4½ millions per annum, and, leaving aside charges of corruption and wilful extravagance, we now know that in recent years an enormous sum has been spent on armaments. It would be possible for us to put an end absolutely to such expenditure, and we should have 3½ millions for the service of the loan.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That would be only with reference to the debt; but the hon. Member omits the great probability of our keeping a large armed force in the country.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG: Yes; but the point is that you may take only such a sum as a million and apply it to the service of the loan.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Which is to be redeemed in ten years.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG: I do not agree with the right hon. Gentleman that it is to be redeemed in ten years.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It says so; the resolution says so.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG: But it would be perfectly open to the British Government to renew the loan at the end of ten years, if that were desirable. If what I am contemplating now is an indemnity loan, and you could make the period of that loan any period you wish, a thirty million loan for a period of ten years would not be suitable to the general market; it would be bad finance. I should say that an indemnity loan ought to extend over a much longer period than ten years. I think that our own loan ought to be issued in bonds of not less a denomination than £100, which would be sufficiently low to appeal to the small investor. Lastly, I believe that the period of the loan should be slightly modified, and the security made in the form of what is called a "five-twenty" bond, and I would urge upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the loan should be issued as soon as possible in order to relieve the markets from suspense.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I confess that when Dives talks in millions the head of Lazarus is apt to get a little dizzy. I was especially glad that the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down should have put in a word for the oppressed stockbrokers. I think it is the business of this House to look after the stockbroker. When I heard it suggested that the man in the savings bank was not allowed to invest more than £50, and when, as I apprehend it, his reward has never been more than 2½ per cent. for the last sixty years, I understand then how it is that that reward is to be a 4½ per cent. loan. [HON. MEMBERS: No!] I thought I caught some such expression from hon. Gentlemen. Surely this House is turned into some sort of whispering gallery when the great magnates of finance chuck about and across the table expressions which humble people in this quarter are wholly unable to follow. I understand the argument is that the Savings Bank investor has no security; and that there is no money to meet his demand, if made. I have been told by a high financial authority that if he gets a chance to subscribe for the stock of this loan, the result will be an inscription of figures in a ledger, and that there is really no money to meet his demand. But we are told that there is to be nothing less than £100 bonds issued, by way of giving the working man a chance of investment in this loan. I do

not know myself what a bond is. I never saw a bond, but I know that this means that all these glorious financial arrangements will inure for the benefit of the stockbroker. I think that is possible; that is, I understand, the true result of the doctrine of ransom, which has had a further exemplification from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, as I understand it, defended his finance from the attacks of the strict Tory party, represented by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet, who is not sufficiently imbued with the modernity of the Tory party since the advent of the Liberal Unionists. I would advise him to learn to sup with a long spoon. The right hon. Gentleman has defended his finance on this basis. He says, "I will raise twelve and a half millions in taxation of the country, and the remaining thirty-five millions I will borrow. But the borrowing is really only to be on the security of the Transvaal; for this country will never have to pay back the amount, and we will levy the whole amount on what is called the Transvaal." The right hon. Gentleman further said, "I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Monmouthshire declare that he was glad the Transvaal would meet the 30 millions." I confess my knowledge of the Transvaal is chiefly confined to a shilling visit I paid to the African show. [Laughter.] Really, there was a great deal that was instructive in that show, which was got up by Mr. Cecil Rhodes and his friends, before the war, in order to expose to the people of this country the enormous riches of the Transvaal. Why, I had almost a stroke of paralysis when I saw there enormous blocks of gold rising up into the skies, and the British warlike spirit was inflamed by reading that under the gold reefs of Johannesburg there was still waiting to be raised two thousand millions of money. I understand that when we take the Transvaal we will take all that property. [HON. MEMBERS: "No"; and laughter.] Is not that so? [Laughter, and HON. MEMBERS: "No."] Surely it is so. Surely when you destroy without any hesitation in the world a legally constituted Government — [HON. MEMBERS: "No"; and laughter.] The hon. Gentleman has said he is opposed to great constitutional changes; but when you destroy a constitutional Government, one with which you have solemn treaties, what hesitation need you have in viola-

ting the spirit of the Companies Acts? Take all these leading companies—the Consolidated Gold Fields and the Rand Mines. Why should we not swindle them as well as Kruger? I understand we put up a statue to honour Cromwell, who went over to Ireland and there confiscated, without hesitation, the property of every man, woman, and child, and gave it to his soldiers. Why should it be said that our booty in the Transvaal is limited to thirty millions? Is it or is it not the fact that the gold companies in the Transvaal own a property worth two thousand millions? Why should we not steal their property as well as steal the land from the Boers? I want to know on what principle can we say that the Transvaal is only able to bear thirty millions. Why this extraordinary hesitation of the Government? Why does it strain at a gnat and swallow a camel? You destroy a Government and violate the sentiment of liberty of the Boer people, and yet you are afraid of Wernher Beit and Company, and of Cecil Rhodes. That is extraordinary moderation. As I understand it, the value that we, the Irish people, are getting for this war is, that having to pay down our money, we get the gold mines in exchange. It is not for the sake of giving the Uitlanders the franchise that I have gone to war. I have fitted myself with a Mauser rifle and a bandolier for the purpose of getting the gold mines. But I do not want, on the 30th September, when the British flag is floating over Pretoria, to be told that private property must be left intact. The shareholders of these gold mines are most respectable people, it may be said; but so is Kruger a most respectable person, and all the Boers are Bible-loving and honest Protestants. Is Cecil Rhodes a greater Protestant than Kruger? I do sincerely trust that my confidence in the Government will not be shaken, and that we shall have in good time a proper dividend upon the money we are now asked to invest. I have no hesitation in backing up the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, that this thirty millions loan will be repaid by the Transvaal. I have no objection, but I want it to be repaid eight or nine times over; and then Ireland, for the first time, will get some benefit from the great partnership of which we are told we ought to be proud. I do hope

Mr. T. M. Healy.

we shall have some clear statement from the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the grounds on which the Irish people are to be asked to join in your great campaign. Although I generally sympathise with and subscribe to the sentiments of the hon. Member for West Monmouth, I rather take the view—but upon wholly different grounds from those of the right hon. Gentleman—that the Government are perfectly right in regard to this grand deed. I would have preferred that the twelve and a-half millions should not have gone in extra taxation, but that all the cost of the war should be borne by way of loan; because, as we are engaged in this profitable buccaneering expedition, I do not understand why this twelve and a-half millions should be provided by the taxpayers of this country, and not got out of the Johannesburg mines. It seems to me to be making two bites of a cherry. It is wholly impossible to expect that the simple-minded gentlemen who preside over the gold mines, and who declare that their property is to be twice doubled in value by this war, will do this; but I heard the other day that they said that after the war they will reduce Johannesburg to the position of Kimberley, that they would drive out all the white labour, and work the mines with natives at wages of 4d. per day, and shut the natives up in compounds, banish the Uitlanders, and put an end to the Uitlander question. I think that is a very practical suggestion from their point of view, but surely they would not deprive the general body of the taxpayers of Great Britain and Ireland of the comfortable knowledge that we are putting our money in a good thing. I should be disappointed if we are not going to annex Johannesburg in the true Cromwell fashion, gold mines and all. I trust we shall have sufficient assurance that the gold mines shall be British property when this cruel war is over, and that the Irish people will realise that for the first time they have had a sound commercial investment and great profit as the result of belonging to this glorious Empire.

*MR. MARKS (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Whether it be true or not that Ireland contributes more than a fair share of the taxation of the Empire, we have had evidence in the speech of the honourable and learned Member for North Louth that Ireland does not contribute an excessive share of financial

wisdom to this House. We have been told that the savings banks deposits have hitherto received $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; that is only a mistake of one quarter per cent., and perhaps not important. We have been told that the new loan is to be issued at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., which is a brilliant effort of the imagination. We have been told that there is no means to meet the deposits in the savings banks, whereas these deposits are invested in Consols. Then we have been told that there is some difficulty as to obtaining a war indemnity from the Transvaal unless we take over the mines in the Transvaal worth several thousands of millions, as we took over the Burma ruby mines. But the Burma ruby mines were never taken over by the Government; they were concessions given to a limited company. The Transvaal revenue of $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions has been chiefly derived from the taxation of the mining industry. More than seven-eighths of that was contributed by the Uitlanders. We have espoused the cause of the Uitlanders, and I can conceive of nothing fairer than that the Uitlanders should contribute a substantial part of the expenses of the war. It is an open secret that the Government of the Transvaal, carried on with Republican simplicity, need not cost more than a million. It is easy to see where the rest of the four and a half millions have gone, and for what purposes they have been expended. But if you take a million to defray the cost of the administration of the country, you have three and a half millions to apply to the purposes of the war indemnity. [AN HON. MEMBER: Including the cost of the Army of occupation.] Well, one million would amply provide for the service of a loan of thirty millions, which would leave a balance of over two millions for other purposes. I would impress on the Chancellor of the Exchequer the advisability of making some definite announcement at the earliest moment as to what interest the new loan is to bear. We have heard two different opinions, but the matter is of very great importance and should not be left in doubt.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): The speech which has just been delivered by the hon. Gentleman gives a pretty good indication of the feeling which has actuated most people in this country who have clamoured for the war. He has spoken with apparent delight of the revenues of

the Transvaal, and gloated over the millions which he hopes will be drawn from the coffers of the Transvaal Government into the coffers of this Government after the war is over. That goes to prove the theory that the war was entered into not because of any desire to build up a good or just system of Government in the Transvaal, but to satisfy certain speculators in this country and in Africa who wish to acquire the great wealth which the Transvaal holds. I have been in this House a long time, and nothing has astonished me more than the light-hearted way in which million upon million of the taxes of the working people of this country are voted away. We have hardly had a single speech to-night from any representative of the masses, offering the slightest protest against this proposed loan of thirty-five millions. To my mind it is incredible that the people of this country seriously desire this expenditure or are in favour of carrying on the war at such enormous cost. The sum is as great as the cost of the Crimean War, when it was a question, not of facing a few thousand farmers, but of facing the great Empire of Russia. And what is the condition of this country while all this money is being spent? Nobody knows better than the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer the extreme difficulty with which large numbers of people in this country pay the taxes that are already heaped upon them. It is as much as the masses can do to keep body and soul together, and provide food and clothing for their children, without being asked to contribute millions of money to be spent, not for the purpose of bettering the lives of the people, nor for developing the resources of this country or of Ireland, but for carrying fire and sword and desolation throughout the length and breadth of two small territories, whose total population does not come up to 200,000. It takes 200,000 soldiers and £60,000,000 to bring into subjection these few thousand farmers, and yet we hear people talking about glory, see them waving Union Jacks, and singing "Rule Britannia." The whole world is laughing at the childish trumpeting which has followed the recent successes. I object to this loan because it is a dishonest way of providing the funds for carrying on the war; because, if the Government are honest in believing that the people are so much in favour of the war, why

do they not ask them to pay by direct taxation the whole cost of it? When the British find that they will have to pay additional taxation now, and additional taxation to a greater degree in the future, because of this loan, the enthusiasm of the people over this war will cool down. From the Irish point of view I object to this loan. Ireland will have to pay an enormous share when the time for payment comes, and we protest against it. One of the most detestable things about this war is that the English people and the English Government will not wage it at their own expense and pay the bill out of their own pockets, but compel the Irish people to share in the expense of a contest which they both hate and despise, and in which they have had neither hand nor heart. Let me make a suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman. If the British Empire is the solid, compact body that it is described at the present time, why not appeal to the colonies—Australia, Queensland, New Zealand, Canada, and India—to all the enormous race over which the British flag flies in all parts of the world—to bear a portion of this loan? Why not spread it over the Empire as a whole? The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that, if to-morrow morning he expressed a hope that a single million would be put on any one of the colonies, that hope would be falsified. He knows full well that, outside this trumpery clamour to take part in a military undertaking, which will always be found among the adventurous men of every land, not one of the colonies would permit for five minutes a tax to be levied on them, and that, after all that has been said and all the doggerel rhymes written by Mr. Rudyard Kipling, it comes to this—that it is the toiling millions of England, Scotland, and Ireland who will have to pay, and the great loyalty of the Empire of which we have heard so much is all humbug. I object to sanction the resolution for the reason that, if this war is a war for the Empire, it is only right that all the colonies should bear their share of the expense, and that it is not right to put the whole burden of the £60,000,000 upon the already over-burdened taxpayers of England, Scotland, and Ireland. I desire to have it left on record that, so far as I am concerned, I protest against the resolution sanctioning this enormous loan, and the detestable reflection that we are not

Mr. William Redmond.

only obliged to stand by while, as we believe, liberty and justice are being outraged, but we have to pay for it as well. Ireland will pay her share towards the expenses of this war with the greatest possible reluctance. That is the view of eighty Irish representatives in this House, and the view on which we are prepared to face our constituents when the time comes. One of my objections is that this loan is to carry on a war against a people who lived in peace in this country long before English was ever spoken there—[Cries of “No, no!” “Oh, do read history!”]—the cost of which is at the same time robbing the taxpayers of the three kingdoms. If the right hon. Gentleman had come and said that he was going to signalise the end of the nineteenth century by doing something for the mass of the people, and had asked for £35,000,000 for old age pensions, I would have supported him, but I will not support this, because it is not for the benefit of the people, but for the benefit of a gang of speculators.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Would it be in order to move to insert after the word “raised” the words “in Her Majesty’s dominions,” so as to make this tax applicable to the whole of the Empire?

*THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Gentleman means by that to extend taxation to the colonies, that, of course, we cannot do.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I thought anything could be done by Act of Parliament.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) complained that no information had been vouchsafed to the House as to the rate of interest or the conditions of issue of the loan. He gathered that a new plan was to be adopted by which the middleman would disappear; that the right hon. Gentleman proposed to open a department for the sale of stock without the intervention of a broker. What he desired to know was whether it was proposed to make any provision for the repayment of the loan.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Because that would mean an addition of something like £4,000,000 to the expenditure of the country. He now understood that it was proposed to leave this loan without any provision as to repayment, in the hope that it would be made up out of the

gold in the Transvaal, failing which it would be provided by the falling in of annuities at the end of the year. The hon. Member for North Louth had said that we should take over the gold mines, but that could not be done, because under the proclamation of Sir Alfred Milner the mines were guaranteed to the mineowners. The only way to repay this loan out of the mines of the Transvaal would be by obtaining the consent of the owners of those mines to take the £35,000,000, to do which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have to obtain the consent of the shareholders of the mines, who comprised every nationality under the sun, and lived in all parts of the world. The only thing in that regard which could be done was to appeal to the owners of the mines to make a voluntary contribution. In his opinion there ought to be more loan and less income tax in this Budget. The right hon. Gentleman had been very confident as to the gold mines, and no doubt thought he would obtain something. No doubt he ought to do so, and it was to be hoped he would.

*MR. JONATHAN SAMUEL (Stockton) said he did not oppose the Vote, but merely rose to call attention to some remarks made by the hon. Member for St. George's in the East, which he considered of a most misleading character. Having regard to the fact that the hon.

Member was a newspaper editor, the fact that there was so much ignorance through the country on the question of the war was not to be wondered at. The hon. Member had told the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there would be a surplus from the revenue of the Transvaal of about £3,000,000 a year, that the revenue was £4,800,000, and that the administration of the country cost £1,000,000, and the balance would be available. There were two kinds of revenue—the taxable and the non-taxable—and the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the previous night had pointed out that our non-taxable revenue amounted to over £20,000,000, and came from Post Office, telegraphs, Crown lands, etc. Had the hon. Member for St. George's in the East analysed the Budgets which had come in the Blue-books sent over by Sir A. Milner, he would have found the total taxable revenue in the Transvaal was some £2,600,000, and that the other came from postal telegraphs, railways, the manufacture of dynamite, etc. The ignorance shown by the hon. Member for St. George's in the East was astonishing in view of the fact that the information in the Blue-books was of easy access to any hon. Member of the House.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 161; Noes, 26. (Division List No. 59.)

AYES.

Aeland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
 Althusen, Augustus Henry E.
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold, Alfred
 Arrol, Sir William
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Baker, Sir John
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manc'r.)
 Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Beach, Rt. Hn. W. W. B. (Hants)
 Beckett, Ernest William
 Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
 Bethell, Commander
 Billson, Alfred
 Bond, Edward
 Bowles, T. G. (King's Lynn)
 Broadhurst, Henry
 Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Sir Chas. (Glasgow)
 Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, J. A. (Worc'r.)
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Charrington, Spencer
 Clough, Walton Owen
 Cozhill, Douglas Harry
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse

Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
 Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Hereford)
 Cornwallis, Fiennes S. W.
 Cross, H. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Curzon, Viscount
 Denny, Colonel
 Dickinson, Robert Edmond
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Dinkin, Richard Sim
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Doughty, George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
 Duckworth, James
 Dunn, Sir William
 Faber, George Denison
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Fry, Lewis
 Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (C. of Lond.)
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)

Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Green, W. D. (Wedgebury)
 Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
 Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
 Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hazell, Walter
 Heath, James
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Hedderwick, Thos. Charles H.
 Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Houston, R. P.
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
 Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
 Kitson, Sir James
 Langley, Batty
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lea, Sir T. (Londonderry)
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool)
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William

Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Crae, George
 M'Killop, James
 M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
 Marks, Henry Hananel
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn W. F.
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monk, Charles James
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Philipps, John Wynford

Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs, Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plunkett, Rt. Hn. Horace Curzon
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richards, Henry Charles
 Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlep'l)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Seton-Karr, Henry
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)

Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarth'n. E.)
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Wharton, Rt. Hn. J. Lloyd
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Woods, Samuel
 Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
 Ambrose, Robert
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Burns, John
 Crilly, Daniel
 Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
 Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
 Doogan, P. C.
 Engledew, Charles John
 Hogan, James Francis

Kilbride, Denis
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'l'nd)
 Macaleese, Daniel
 MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qn's. Co.)
 M'Dermott, Patrick
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
 O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 O'Malley, William
 Power, Patrick Joseph

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Redmond, William (Clare)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns
 Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Captain Donelan and Mr.
 Patrick O'Brien.

INCOME TAX.

2. Resolved, that income tax shall be charged for the year beginning the sixth day of April nineteen hundred at the rate of one shilling.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

BROKERS' CONTRACT NOTES.

3. Motion made and Question proposed, "That there shall be charged upon a note sent by any person carrying on the business of a broker to his principal advising him of the sale or purchase of any goods, wares, or merchandise, the stamp duty following (that is to say):—

If the goods, wares or merchandise are—

Of the value of five
 pounds and under
 the value of one
 hundred pounds one penny.

Of the value of one
 hundred pounds or
 upwards one shilling."

—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I have been in communication with several brokers and others in London and Liverpool, and I propose to receive a deputation from them next week. I have no desire to do anything which would cause inconvenience to business.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I have received representations from my constituents on the matter, but in view of what has just been stated by the right hon. Gentleman I think I may with confidence leave the matter in his hands.

Question put, and agreed to.

ESTATE DUTY.

4. Resolved, that in the case of a person dying after the thirty-first day of March, nineteen hundred, property, real or personal, in which that person or any other person had an interest limited to cease on the death of the deceased shall, for the purpose of the Finance Act, 1894, and the Acts amending that Act, be deemed to pass on the death of the deceased notwithstanding that such interest has been surrendered, assured, or otherwise disposed of during the lifetime of the deceased, notwithstanding that such interest has been surrendered, assured, or otherwise disposed of during the lifetime of the deceased whether for value or not to or for the benefit of the remainderman or reversioner, except where the surrender, assurance, or disposition was *bona fide* made twelve months before the death of the deceased, and *bona fide* possession and enjoyment of the property was assumed thereunder by that

remainderman or reversioner immediately upon the surrender, assurance, or disposition, and thenceforward retained to the entire exclusion of the person making the same, and of any benefit to him by contract or otherwise.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

FINANCE ACT, 1894 (MODIFICATION OF EXCLUSIONS).

5. Resolved, that the exclusion of property from aggregation under section four of The Finance Act, 1894, shall cease to take effect except as regards property in which the deceased never had an interest, but that a limited abatement or return of the duty may be allowed in certain cases in the event of the aggregation with any other property of property which passes on the death of the deceased under a disposition made by a person (other than the deceased) who died before the expiration of the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

FINANCE ACT, 1896 (REPEAL OF EXCLUSIONS).

6. Resolved, that for the purpose of the rate and the amount of estate duty or settlement estate duty, the exclusion under section seventeen of the Finance Act, 1896, of any fraction from the principal value of the estate shall cease.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow ; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS [5TH MARCH]—REPORT.

Resolutions reported :—

TEA.

1. "That, in lieu of the duty of customs now payable on tea, there shall be charged, levied, and paid on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, the following duty (that is to say) :—

	£	s.	d.
Tea per pound	0	0	6."

Resolution read the first and second time.

Motion made and Question proposed : —"That the House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) : The whole question as it presents itself to the Irish Members in this House has been discussed in Committee, and subsequent opportunities no doubt must arise when these questions can be discussed again on the Bills being introduced. Under these circumstances, I do not think we have anything to gain by putting the House to the trouble of four or five divisions at this stage, which would only have the result of marching Members through the lobbies, without putting a serious obstacle in the way of the granting of the money. Under these circumstances the Irish Members will reserve for a subsequent occasion the continuation of our protest against the allocation of this money.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH : I can quite understand what the hon. Member has just said, and I have to thank him for the manner in which, while preserving his own opinions, he has consulted the convenience of the House.

Question put and agreed to.

TOBACCO.

2. "That in addition to the duties of customs now payable on tobacco imported into Great Britain or Ireland, there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say) :—

	£	s.	d.
Tobacco, manufactured, viz. :—			
Cigars the lb.	0	0	6
Cavendish or negrohead the lb.	0	0	6
Cavendish or negrohead, manufactured in bond the lb.	0	0	5
Other manufactured tobacco the lb.	0	0	5
Snuff containing more than thirteen pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof the lb.	0	0	5
Snuff not containing more than thirteen pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof the lb.	0	0	6
Tobacco, unmanufactured, viz. :—			
Containing ten pounds or more of moisture in every hundred pounds weight thereof the lb.	0	0	4

Containing less than ten pounds of moisture in every one hundred pounds weight thereof ... the lb. 0 0 4."

SPIRITS.—EXCISE.

3. "That in addition to the duty of excise now payable for every gallon computed at proof of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duty (that is to say) :—

For every gallon of spirits	£	s.	d.
computed at proof and so			
in proportion for any less			
quantity"	...	...	0 0 6."

SPIRITS.—CUSTOMS.

4. "That, in addition to the duties of customs now payable on spirits imported into Great Britain or Ireland, there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the duties following (that is to say) :—

For every gallon of spirits	£	s.	d.
computed at proof, of			
spirits of any description,			
except perfumed spirits ...	0	0	6

For every gallon of perfumed			
spirits	...	...	0 0 10

For every gallon of liqueurs,			
cordials, mixtures, and			
other preparations entered			
in such a manner as to indicate			
that the strength is			
not to be tested ...	...	...	0 0 8

And the duties of customs on the articles hereafter mentioned, being articles in which spirit is contained or in the manufacture of which spirit is used, shall be proportionately increased, and shall be as follows :—

		£	s.	d.
Chloral hydrate	... the lb.	0	1	4
Chloroform	... the lb.	0	3	3
Collodion	... the gal.	1	6	3
Ether acetic	... the lb.	0	1	11
Ether butyric	... the gal.	0	16	5
Ether sulphuric	... the gal.	1	7	5
Ethyl, iodide of	... the gal.	0	14	3
Ethyl bromide	... the lb.	0	1	1
Ethyl chloride	... the gal.	0	16	5."

BEER.—EXCISE.

5. "That in addition to the duty of excise now payable in respect of beer

brewed in the United Kingdom there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say) :—

For every thirty-six gallons	£	s.	d.
of worts of a specific			
gravity of one thousand			
and fifty-five degrees the			
duty of ...	...	...	0 1 0

and so in proportion for any difference in quantity or gravity."

BEER.—CUSTOMS.

6. "That in addition to the duties of customs now payable on beer imported into Great Britain or Ireland there shall, on and after the sixth day of March, nineteen hundred, and until the first day of August, nineteen hundred and one, be charged, levied, and paid the following duties (that is to say) :—

In the case of beer called or similar to mum, spruce, black beer, or Berlin white beer or other preparations whether fermented or not fermented of a similar character—

For every thirty-six gallons	£	s.	d.
where the worts thereof			
are or were before fermentation			
of a specific			
gravity—			

Not exceeding one			
thousand two hundred			
and fifteen			
degrees, a duty of ...	0	4	0

Exceeding one thousand			
two hundred and			
fifteen degrees, a duty			
of ...	...	...	0 4 8

In the case of every description of beer other than that above specified—

For every thirty-six gallons			
where the worts thereof			
were before fermentation			
of a specific gravity			
of one thousand and			
fifty-five degrees, a duty			
of ...	...	...	0 1 0

and so in proportion for any difference in gravity."

AMENDMENT OF LAW.

7. "That it is expedient to prolong the term of certain annuities, and amend the law relating to the National Debt, the Customs, and the Inland Revenue."

Resolutions agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James William Lowther, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Hanbury.

SUPPLY (2ND MARCH)—REPORT.

Resolutions reported :—

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £5,527,000, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the expenses of wages, etc., to officers, seamen and boys, coastguard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £845,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the expense of works, buildings, and repairs, at home and abroad, including the cost of superintendence, purchase of sites, grants in aid, and other charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES), 1899-1900.

CLASS V.

3. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £162,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for grants in aid of the expenses of the British Protectorates in Uganda and in Central and East Africa."

4. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £58,905, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for sundry colonial services, including certain grants in aid."

5. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £10,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the subsidies to certain telegraph companies."

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £2,847, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, to make good the net loss on transactions connected with the raising of money for the various treasury chests abroad in the year 1898-9."

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CLASS VI.

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £60,686, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, to make good the sum by which the interest accrued in the year ended 20th November, 1899, from securities held by the National Debt Commissioners, on account of 'The Fund for the Banks for Savings' and 'The Fund for Friendly Societies' was insufficient to meet the interest which the said Commissioners are obliged by statute to pay and credit to trustees of savings banks and to friendly societies; and also the sum by which the interest accrued in the year ended 31st December, 1899, from securities held by the National Debt Commissioners on account of 'The Post Office Savings Bank Fund,' was insufficient to meet the interest which the said Commissioners are obliged by statute to pay and credit to depositors and the expenses incurred during that year in the execution of the Acts relating thereto."

CLASS VII.

8. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £500, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the salaries and other expenses of temporary commissions, committees, and special inquiries."

9. "That a sum, not exceeding £23,327, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for making good certain sums written off from the assets of the Local Loans Fund."

CLASS III.

10. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,440, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the salaries and expenses of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland and of the prisons under their control."

CLASS IV.

11. "That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £3,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March,

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1900, for the Department of Science and Art in respect of Science Schools."

Resolutions agreed to.

SHOPS BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Whereupon Motion made and Question put, "That this House do now adjourn."
—(*Lord Hugh Cecil.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 110; Noes, 61. (Division List No. 60.)

AYES.

Aeland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Althusen, Augustus Henry E.
Anstruther, H. T.
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manchester)
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bethell, Commander
Bond, Edward
Bullard, Sir Harry
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birmingham)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worcester)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Cooke, C. W. R. (Hereford)
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cross, Herib. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon, Viscount
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Faber, George Denison
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch, George H.

Finlay, Sir R. Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of London)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Sir A. Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, W. D. (Widnesbury)
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W.
Hardy, Laurence
Hazell, Walter
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houston, R. P.
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorkshire, N. R.)
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorkshire)
Lea, Sir T. (Londonderry)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
McKillop, James
Marks, Henry Hananel
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Monk, Charles James
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrell, George Herbert

Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Phillipotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Rt. Hon. H. Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Sir T.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. T.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Russell, T. W. (Tyne)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, H. S. (Limehouse)
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Lord Hugh Cecil and Mr.
George J. Goschen.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Ambrose, Robert
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Billson, Alfred
Broadhurst, Henry
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Chas. (Glasgow)
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, Sir William
Engledew, Charles John
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Harwood, George

Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Kilbride, Denis
Kinlock, Sir John George Smyth
Langley, Batty
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Queen's Co.)
McCrae, George
McDermott, Patrick
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
Norton, Captain C. Wm.
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Malley, William

Philips, John Wynford
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Sullivan, Donald (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Thomas, Abel (Glam., E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Woods, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir Charles Dilke and Mr.
Maddison.

Adjourned accordingly at half after Eight of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 7th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

CHRISTCHURCH, BOURNEMOUTH, AND WINTON TRAMWAYS.

Report [6th March] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Atherley Jones and Mr. Samuel Evans.

PETITIONS.

BOILERS REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION BILL.

Petition of the Mining Association of Great Britain, against; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Faversham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Brondesbury; Needham Market; and Chelmsford; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Blackburn; Chelmsford; Leicester; and Elgin; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Needham Market; Brondesbury; Stamford; St. Mary's; Sneinton; Stockton-on-Tees; Holt; Blaenavon; Liverpool; Middleton in Teesdale; Sheffield; Llanhilleth; Chelmsford; Talywain; Bristol; and Portsmouth; to lie upon the Table.

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TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Doune, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Forty-ninth Report from the Church Estates Commissioners for the year preceding 1st March, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 22nd February, 1900, declaring that Mr. Roger Taning Sleigh, Sub-postmaster, Morley, Leeds, Post Office department, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICES (EXCESS), 1898-9.

Copy presented, of Statement of the Sum required to be voted in order to make good an Excess on the Grant for Prisons, England and the Colonies, for the year ended on the 31st March, 1899 [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 87.]

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (ORDINANCE).

Copy presented, of Ordinance No. 1 of the University Court of the University of Edinburgh, providing for the separation of the teaching of Medical Jurisprudence or Forensic Medicine and Public Health in the University of Edinburgh [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 88.]

BOILERS REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): In rising to move the Second Reading of this Bill I do not anticipate it will be incumbent on me to make any excessive demand either on the time of the House or the patience of hon. Members who do me the honour to

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listen to me. The object which the promoters of this Bill have in view is one which I venture to think will commend itself favourably to the judgment of hon. Members on both sides of the House. It is to prevent, as far as possible, the loss of life and the injury to person, not to mention the destruction of valuable property which is caused every year by the explosion of boilers. It may be, and probably will be, contended during the course of this debate that the loss of life and injury to persons from such a cause is very small compared with the number of steam boilers in use, but be the loss and the injury small or great, if we can prove, as I believe we can, that such loss and suffering arise from preventible causes, then I contend we shall have made out a case for further intervention on the part of the Legislature in the interests of the general community. It is now very generally admitted that the provisions of the Boilers Explosions Act of 1882 are utterly inadequate to meet the necessities of the case. Indeed, that was pointed out in the debate on the Second Reading of the Bill* by the hon. Member for West Edinburgh, who then represented the Birkenhead Division of Lancashire. He pointed out that the inquiry clause, which was the chief clause, was all very well in itself, but that if the proposed legislation were to be really effective, it should provide for a proper system of inspection. The Act of 1882 provides merely for an inquiry after an explosion has occurred. It merely proceeds to lock the door after the steed has been stolen. The Board of Trade are authorised by that Act, after an explosion has occurred, to institute an inquiry into the causes which led to it, and the commissioners making the inquiry are authorised to inflict a penalty if they are of opinion that the explosion was due to neglect or mismanagement on the part of the owner of the boiler. There is no single provision in the Act of 1882 that can by any ingenuity be construed into a preventive clause. The promoters of the Bill, which afterwards became the Act of 1882, relied solely on the moral effect of having an inquiry as being in their judgment sufficient to induce steam users to provide for a more frequent and complete examination of their boilers, and they hoped conse-

quently to be able to secure greater safety for human life and greater immunity from danger for persons employed in connection with boilers. That such was the case is clear from the language used by the hon. Member who at that time had charge of the Bill—the late Mr. Hugh Mason, who was then Member for Ashton-under-Lyne. In moving the Second Reading of the Bill he said—

“The promoters of the measure thought it best to take the steam users of the country into their confidence, and to show them that it was their interest as well as their duty to enrol themselves in one of the numerous voluntary associations for the inspection of boilers, and to induce them to do voluntarily what an Act of Parliament would require them to do perhaps unwillingly.”

The promoters relied chiefly on the moral effect which they thought would be produced upon steam users by the fact that the Board of Trade could, under the Act, institute an inquiry, and inflict a penalty if it was discovered that the explosion was due to carelessness, neglect, or mismanagement. They believed that that would be sufficient to induce users of steam boilers to secure more careful and complete inspection of such boilers. But I think I am safe in saying that, after seventeen years' experience of the operations of that Act, the result has demonstrated very clearly that something more than moral pressure is required to induce a certain class of boiler owners to see to the proper safety and examination of their boilers. Since the Act came into operation the Board of Trade has held no less than 1,189 inquiries into cases in which the loss of life has been 502 and in which 1,544 persons have been injured. The average number of explosions, during the seventeen years over which the official reports extend, was 69·9 per annum, the average loss of life was 29·5, and the average number of persons injured was 61·3. As I have already intimated, it may be contended that this loss and injury are small and that legislation is unnecessary to deal with the cases which exist, but I would like to point out to the House that these explosions are not, on the highest authority—the authority of a Government official—to be attributed to unpreventable causes. I should like, with the permission of the House, to read a short extract from a Report by the late Mr. Thomas Gray, who was Assistant

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Third Series], Vol. cclxvi., commencing at page 1348.

Mr. Fenwick.

Secretary to the Marine Department of the Board of Trade. He was authorised, on behalf of the Board of Trade, to make an inquiry into the working of the Boilers Explosions Act, and that inquiry extended from the 12th of July, 1882, to the 30th of June, 1889. In his first Report he uses these words—

“The terms ‘inevitable accident’ and ‘accident’ are entirely inapplicable to these explosions. The reports show that so far from these explosions being accidental, the only accidental thing about many of them is that the explosions should have been so long deferred.”

In his second Report, Mr. Gray uses very similar language. He says—

“It is still true that the terms ‘inevitable accident’ and ‘accident’ are wholly inapplicable to these explosions, and in many cases it is difficult to understand how the explosions could have been so long deferred.”

Then he proceeds to say—

“The prevailing cause of explosions continues to be the unsound condition of the boilers, due to age or corrosion, and a notable feature in many cases is the neglect of the steam users to ascertain the condition of their boilers and consequently of any attempt on their part to repair, renew, or replace defective fittings.”

In succeeding Reports Mr. Gray uses precisely similar language, clearly indicating that the terms “accident” and “inevitable accident” are wholly inapplicable to the great majority of boiler explosions which are inquired into year by year by the Board of Trade. During the last four years inquiries have been held by the Board of Trade into cases where the total loss of life has been eighty-one, in addition to 136 persons injured. The Reports on these cases show that in not a single one of them has the court attributed the explosion to unavoidable accident, and of the sixty-eight cases which were inquired into last year in only one case did the Court find that no one was to blame for the explosion. Surely, in face of facts such as these, it will not be disputed that a case does exist for some further protective measures being adopted in order to provide a greater degree of safety for persons in charge of steam engines and boilers. I will now state briefly what the promoters of this Bill propose, and hon. Members will observe that there are two other Bills standing on the Order Paper dealing with the same question. If I am in order, I should like

to make one observation with regard to one of these Bills. The fundamental principle of our Bill is that it shall be obligatory on the part of owners of steam boilers to register the same in conformity with the provisions of the Act, if it becomes an Act. Such register we suggest shall be kept by the Board of Trade, who may, if they think fit, provide for the establishment of local or branch registers. The Bill of the hon. Baronet the Member for North-west Manchester proposes also under certain regulations that the Board of Trade should keep such a register. In the next place, we are insisting upon a compulsory examination and inspection of boilers by thoroughly qualified persons appointed by the Board of Trade. Hon. Members will observe that in the Bill it is stated that such inspectors must be boiler makers. I called the attention of the promoters of the Bill to this provision. I told them frankly that I myself could not support it, and I very frankly received from them an assent to the suggestion I now make, that we should not create a ring round any particular branch of industry or any particular class of working men, but that the utmost freedom and latitude should be given for the selection of thoroughly qualified persons to perform the duty of boiler inspectors. We are therefore perfectly willing to meet any opposition with regard to that part of the Bill with the greatest readiness and frankness. We also propose that there shall be not less than five examinations and inspections in each year—two not under steam and three while the boiler is in use. The powers which we propose to give to the inspectors are very similar to the powers now exercised by factory and mine inspectors under the Factories and Mines Inspection Act. These are the main lines upon which our Bill is drawn. I have already referred to the Bill of the hon. Baronet the Member for North-west Manchester. The Bill is, I believe, put forward chiefly by the members of the Manchester Steam Users' Association. That association has been in existence for nearly half a century, and I am willing to admit that during that time much valuable work has been done by it. It has been successful in inducing a number of steam users to have their boilers inspected periodically, and I have no doubt that a number of explosions which would otherwise have occurred

have consequently been prevented. Two of the main essentials of that Bill are precisely similar to our own; it insists upon registration and inspection of boilers being made compulsory. The point of difference between us—and it is a very important point—is that which relates to the inspection itself. We propose that the inspection shall be under the control of a Government Department; they prefer that the inspection shall be controlled by the great corporations and voluntary associations in existence in various parts of the country. There is a broad line of difference between us. We prefer a Government Department, because we believe it will have greater power and greater authority to enforce its recommendations than is possessed by corporations at the present time. I think we need only refer to one or two cases taken from the inspectors' reports to the Board of Trade to show that there is very strong ground for believing that if this question is left entirely to the local associations and great corporations the result will be unsatisfactory. I wish to call attention to the Redcar case, which occurred on the 14th June, 1895, in which eleven boilers blew up at one time, killing twelve men and injuring seven others. These boilers were insured under what is known as the "group system" for a sum of £500. The insurance company had made an examination of the boilers prior to the explosion, and made certain recommendations to the owner, but they did not press the result of their investigation, and the explosion occurred, and lives were lost. Now, why did not the insurance company press home the result of their examination? The reason must be obvious to the mind of every hon. Gentleman. It was because they were afraid of losing custom. The competition in this class of insurance is excessively keen, and if they had pressed the result of their examination upon the attention of the owner of the boilers the result might be that he would withdraw his custom. I fear if we are to leave this question solely to be dealt with by voluntary corporations and associations we will not achieve the result which, at all events, the promoters of this Bill have in view. It is not punishment we seek; we seek to prevent explosions and the suffering and loss of life that frequently follow them. Take another typical case—the Halifax case—which occurred on the 23rd of May,

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1895, in which five men were killed. The boiler was of the Cornish type, and it had been reduced by corrosion to such a deplorable condition that it was stated by the commissioner who made the inquiry that it had been reduced until it was in parts as thin as an old sixpence. In the opinion of the court of inquiry the dilapidated condition of that boiler was such that any ordinary individual, not merely an expert engineer or boilermaker, making an examination of the boiler would have been able to detect its dangerous condition, and yet that boiler was continued in use, and no examination was made, with the result I have stated to the House. In this case the owner of the boiler was charged with manslaughter, and tried at the Leeds Assizes. The jury, it is true, found a verdict of "Not guilty," but at the investigation made by the Board of Trade under the Act of 1882, counsel for the owner used this very remarkable language—

"It must be obvious to the meanest intelligence that crass ignorance exists as to boilers and the conditions under which they ought to be used. It is lamentable that this should be so, and that the Legislature has not made it compulsory that dangerous articles like boilers should be inspected periodically for the personal protection of those working in their vicinity. There was no doubt that the owner worked this boiler under the honest conviction that he was doing so with perfect safety to himself and those employed by him."

The point to which I wish to call attention is that in the opinion of counsel for the owner it was necessary that the Government should take further steps in order to secure greater immunity from danger to the general public. I do not know what line the Government intend to pursue with reference to this Bill, but I think they cannot rest content with things as they are. They cannot feel satisfied in allowing the present condition of things to remain. What we desire—and it is the sole object we have in view—is to prevent the loss of life and suffering which often follow in consequence of these explosions, and we are not disposed to complain of, or find fault with, any method or machinery that may be adopted so long as that object is attained. What we desire is that some method may be adopted, whether by a Government Department or by local corporations and insurance societies, whereby our view may be attained. We

are not disposed to complain of the method or the machinery by which that object is achieved. Furthermore, on my own responsibility, I would suggest that probably the best course that can be taken will be for the Government to allow this Bill and the two other Bills which stand on the Order Paper to have Second Reading, and that the whole subject be referred to a Select Committee, which would be able to take evidence from persons directly concerned, and which would, after taking full evidence, no doubt arrive at a conclusion which would commend itself to the Government. Doubtless if this course be taken we shall be able to get a Bill which will lead to a considerable improvement on the existing state of things. In this sense I therefore appeal very confidently to hon. Members on both sides of the House to give this Bill a Second Reading, together with the two other Bills on the Order Paper, so that the whole subject may be referred to a Select Committee. I beg to move, Sir.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): I very gladly associate myself with a great deal of the lucid and excellent speech of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of this Bill. At the same time, there is a widespread opposition to the Bill and to the general principles which underlie it. I have no doubt the House will hear reasons against the general idea of a Bill of this character, which may or may not carry conviction. I do not share in that opposition, and while opposing certain parts of the Bill now under consideration, I desire to pronounce myself a supporter of the general principle of the measure—namely, further provision for the protection of life. No one who has studied this question can have failed to arrive at two conclusions. First, that there is a great and lamentable loss of life each year from boiler explosions; and second, that these explosions are almost entirely preventable. It is very seldom indeed that a boiler is found in an isolated position. In the nature of the case it is always either surrounded by factories or by railway passengers, or by a considerable portion of the general public, and, with the ever-increasing

density of our towns where boilers are for the most part used, the range of destruction from boiler explosions is increasing every year. If every boiler were built strong enough originally, and if it were preserved from weakening by corrosion as time goes on and skilfully tended, I have no hesitation in saying that there would be practically no boiler explosions. These conditions obtain in the Navy, and in the mercantile marine partly by legislation and partly by voluntary effort, and they also obtain in the great railway companies and other large concerns. But though in the Navy and the mercantile marine and in the best of our factories there is comparative safety, yet in the agricultural and traction engines, and the boilers of the humbler class of factories and works, there is great danger, and I venture to say that there are in those cases a larger number of accidents in proportion to the number of boilers used. I would point out that the only legislation of a preventable character applicable to the mercantile marine as regards boilers is that applying to ships which carry twelve or more passengers. In those cases a boiler must be inspected by a Board of Trade officer, and the ship must be licensed, but a railway boiler which might be used to drive a train carrying five hundred or more passengers has absolutely no Government inspection, and its safety is dependent entirely on the skill of the railway company's engineers. Again, a stationary boiler may be placed in the immediate neighbourhood of a crowded thoroughfare, and an agricultural boiler may be placed in the midst of a crowded farmyard in harvest time, and there are no other precautions against saving life other than the liberality, good faith, and sense of responsibility of the owners of the boilers. Unfortunately, in these cases, juries almost invariably bring in a verdict of unpreventable accident, and even in the Redcar case, which has been referred to by my hon. friend, where it was admitted by the counsel for the defendant that different arrangements beforehand would have prevented the explosion, the jury practically stated that it was an unpreventable accident. On the other hand, I venture to declare in the strongest manner that there is scarcely a single boiler explosion which is in the nature of an unpreventable accident, and I challenge the hon. Member for South-west

Manchester, who laughs, to disprove that almost the entirety of such explosions can be prevented beforehand, either by the boilers themselves being in first-class condition, or by having entirely skilled persons who would be careful as well as skilled in the management of the boilers.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): Does my hon. friend say all accidents are preventable?

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY: I desire to say that the great majority, and practically the whole of these accidents, are due to preventable causes, and are due either to the condition of the boiler or the lack of care and skill in its management. I would further point out that there are already large numbers of inspectors engaged in this work of examining boilers, such as those employed in the Admiralty, the mercantile marine, Lloyd's, and those employed by the great boiler insurance companies. These inspectors do their work extremely well, and if the owners of all the small second-hand boilers which are used under steam would enter voluntarily under the care either of the Government inspector or of the inspector of these societies, then with proper regulations by the Government there would be no need for this Bill. But it is to protect the public and the better class of manufacturers, who take every precaution, without regard to expense, for safety as well as to protect the workers, that legislation of this kind is necessary. There is no doubt whatever that the competition amongst boiler insurance companies in certain isolated cases has had a harmful effect on the precautions for safety. And it is clear that if the boiler insurance companies put pressure on their customers, to the great inconvenience of manufacturers, they risk the chance of losing their business, and by passing such a measure as this we will remove such a source of danger from competition. But, while admitting this, I fear that if the Bill is passed in its present state the army of inspectors would be increased to an alarming and unnecessary extent, and I do not think the promoters of the measure have sufficiently considered this point. Then, again, the inspectors who are at present appointed to do this work by the Admiralty, the Board of Trade, and the

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voluntary associations are all engineers, and under these circumstances I am surprised to find in the measure a clause limiting the inspectors to boiler makers who have been apprenticed and who have worked for five years at least. If that clause were insisted on it would reduce the sphere of appointments not only to one trade but to one trade society, and I think that even the workers themselves would see that that would be a lamentable state of things. However, I am glad to see that, no matter what may be the result of this debate, the mover of the Bill and those who act with him have consented to the abolition of this limitation, and accepted the principle of the appointment of all persons who are competent. That there is a need for more reform is illustrated by the fact that the House has at this moment under consideration no less than four Bills dealing with the question. There are Bills of the hon. Baronet the Member for North-west Manchester, the hon. Member for Stockton, the present Bill, and the Factory Bill lately introduced by my right hon. friend the Home Secretary, which contains a clause which, so far as I understand it, provides that every boiler owner shall obtain a certificate of safety, and that that certificate shall be registered. If that is so, then the Government measure resembles very much the provisions of the Bill of the hon. Baronet the Member for North-west Manchester, and that is a policy which will commend itself to many other hon. Members. I would suggest that each of these four Bills contains in it something that is good, and I therefore support the suggestion that they should all be referred to a Select Committee. The question is not easy of solution. There may be either compulsion or voluntarism. If voluntarism, it would be of the nature of compulsion in regard to these proposals in providing that a certificate of safety is necessary to be deposited by the boiler owner; but whether that compulsion shall be brought about by means of a Government inspector, or by inspectors chosen by the boiler owner, with his certificate deposited with the Government, it seems to me that there is no alternative to having some reform either in one direction or the other. I sincerely hope that the Home Secretary will agree to refer the whole question to a Select Committee, which would be a selective committee, and which could take out of

these Bills all that is good in them, and produce a good, substantial, sound, working measure. I hope the Home Secretary will not consider that it would be undignified to refer even a Government measure to a Select Committee, and if this is done I hope it will be the commencement of a reform which is very urgent, and would be distinctly useful not only to employers and workers, but to the general public, in the interests of safety.

*MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): I think any new Member of this House who ventures for the first time to address it may reasonably claim its sympathy, unless his nerves happen to be made of cast iron. But in this case I claim a peculiar sympathy, because the subject before the House is a dry, difficult, and complicated one. The Bill which has been introduced in a very able and moderate speech, has objects with which I think all of us have the utmost sympathy. The safety of the life and limb of the great industrial classes of this country is an object for which not only employers of labour, but also legislators, ought, I think, to be very careful. In regard to this matter of boiler explosions, a matter to which I have given, from force of circumstances, very considerable attention, I must say my own opinion is that there is still a case for further legislation; and although I do not sympathise with most of the provisions of the Bill, I must say on the general question I consider it is high time that the matter was settled. Some thirty years ago, in 1870, a Select Committee was appointed to consider the question of boiler explosions. That Committee was reappointed in 1871, and reported in that year. Amongst the recommendations of that Committee there were: first, the duty of a steam user to procure a trustworthy boiler with proper fittings. They decided against the principle of compulsory inspection on certain grounds which they gave. The first was that explosions at that time occurred in one out of every 2,000 boilers in use. The second was that these often arose from causes with which inspection had nothing whatever to do. And another ground was that any measure of compulsory inspection would tend to lessen the responsibility of the owner and user of the boiler. Now, when the explosions of steam-generating boilers—for

it is the question of steam-generating boilers that the Committee considered—are one-fifth or one-sixth of what they were at that time, and when during the intervening thirty years the number of steam-generating boilers has enormously increased, the House is asked to commit itself to the principle of compulsory inspection. I do not object to that. It is a testimony to the increasing humanitarian feeling of the time—a feeling which, in an age often accused of being sordid and money grubbing, is, I think, very much to our credit. Eleven years later, in 1882, the Boilers Explosion Act was passed, and in that Act there is a very extraordinary definition of a boiler. It is—

“Any closed vessel used for generating steam, or for heating water or other liquids, or into which steam is admitted for heating, steaming, boiling, or other similar purposes.”

That definition of a boiler includes not only steam-generating boilers, but it includes also steam pipes, stop valves, steam engine cylinders, and evaporating vessels, such as tar cylinders, ammonia stills, etc. There were certain kinds of boilers not included in that Act of 1882, such as boilers on steamships, and boiler explosions, into which an inquiry might be held under the Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1872 and the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act of 1872, were also excluded. There was also excluded from the purview of the Boilers Explosions Act railway boilers. But the remarkable point about that Act was that although there was such an elaborate and extended definition of a boiler, there was no definition whatever of a boiler explosion, and at the present moment we remain without any definition of what a boiler explosion is. In 1890 there were certain sections of boilers excluded from the purview of the Act of 1882 included among the boilers with which, in future, the Board of Trade had to deal. Having dealt with the history of matter, I will refer for a few moments to the statistics to which the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division has referred, the statistics compiled by the Board of Trade. These statistics, I venture to say, are of little use to any but experts. I do not, of course, mean to bring any charge against those who have tabulated these statistics. I have as high an opinion as any Gentleman on the front bench as to the way the

members of the Civil Service perform their work, and therefore I do not bring any charge against them in regard to the manner in which these statistics are compiled. But anyone who has studied these statistics with any knowledge of the question must have seen that in the earlier years after 1882 there were obviously a large number of what are called boiler explosions under that Act which were not reported and therefore not taken cognisance of by the Board of Trade. I state that not merely because of the number, but from examining the character of the accidents. In the earlier years, for instance, there were no investigations by the Board of Trade into such accidents as the failure and explosion of steam pipes and valves. Since 1890 ships, of course, have come into the purview of the explosions into which the Board of Trade inspectors had to inquire, and therefore the statistics for the purposes of comparison are more or less vitiated by the fact. There is another matter which tends to upset them unless you allow for it, and that is that in every hard winter there are always a large number of explosions in circulating hot-water boilers in churches, etc., which would not occur in a mild winter. In the years 1893-4 there were twenty-three such explosions, and in 1894-5 twenty-seven of these explosions in hot-water circulating boilers, although in the following year there was not one inquired into. These statistics, like all other statistics, if they are fairly used may be of value, and I have endeavoured to tabulate the results of the last five years as fairly as I have been able to do so. The result of that tabulation is that the average number of explosions on ships during the last five years is 6·2, causing nine deaths, and out of these explosions an average of four of the boilers in question were under inspection by the Board of Trade or by Lloyd's. I mention that to show that inspection cannot do everything in regard to this matter. The average annual number of explosions in boilers upon land during the last five years was 13·6, causing 24·6 deaths. There were seven out of these thirteen explosions that inspection might have prevented, and which caused 13·4 deaths, and five explosions, with 11·2 deaths, concerning which no inspection, however competent and thorough, could possibly have prevented; so that, as far

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as regards the actual Bill before us, we are narrowed down to the consideration of these seven explosions and of 13·4 deaths, which is the average number that have occurred on land during the last five years which this Bill would have affected at all. Now, although the Board of Trade statistics, unless carefully analysed, cannot help us very much, there are certain statistics kept by the boiler insurance companies and other agencies, and these, as regards steam-generating boilers, show very clearly that explosions, and particularly deaths resulting from them, have enormously decreased during the last thirty years. Any faults in these statistics arise from acts of omission as regards the earlier years, and therefore in reference to the main argument I am making, any correction of these statistics would tend to intensify the reduction and not to diminish it. From 1866 to 1875 the average number of explosions in steam-generating boilers was 56 per annum, causing 63·6 deaths. In the ten years from 1888 to 1897 the average number of explosions in steam-generating boilers was 28·3, causing 1·45 deaths. Therefore, I say it is very clearly proved to anyone who looks into the matter fairly that, in spite of the faults of the present system, an enormous improvement in respect of steam-generating boilers has taken place. Well, Sir, what are the facts at the present time? I think, as regards inspection, it will be generally agreed that there are 90,000 to 100,000 steam-generating boilers inspected and insured, and there are, perhaps, 50,000 to 60,000 the majority of which are not inspected, and, of course, not insured. But even if we suppose that the total number of steam-generating boilers in this country is 150,000, and if we assume that half of that number only are inspected and insured, and half are not, the details that we can find from the Board of Trade returns of explosions in those boilers insured and inspected and those not insured and uninspected are very remarkable. There have been about seven explosions per annum of boilers insured and inspected, and there have been twenty-one or more explosions in boilers not inspected. Therefore, although there could not possibly be more than half of the boilers of the country not inspected at the present time, it is manifest that the great majority of explosions occur in those boilers which are not inspected.

That is an argument in favour of compulsory inspection. The insurance companies have been more or less attacked in regard to this matter, although I acknowledge the moderation of the hon. Member for Wansbeck. I think I ought to tell the House that I am a director of one of the boiler insurance companies. In fact, that is the reason I have had to look into the matter so closely, and I think it is only fair to those companies to state that, having looked into this matter, out of the seven explosions per annum in boilers which were inspected and insured only about two could possibly have been prevented by inspection; whilst there were five that arose from faults in attendance with which inspection could not deal. That is to say, if there are some 80,000 boilers at the present time inspected and insured, not more than one in each 40,000 exploded in the course of every year in which inspection could have prevented the explosion. I think that is a remarkable result as regards insurance companies, and a result in regard to which those companies may feel that they have done a considerable service to boiler owners and users. The statistics with regard to foreign nations, which I am sorry to say we do not possess in any complete form, are by no means satisfactory. The statistics with regard to France, where there is compulsory Government inspection, show something like one explosion in every 3,000 boilers. I am free to admit that insurance companies do not cover the ground at the present time. In the first place, inspection is not compulsory, and in many cases the very worst boilers still remained uninspected in this country. Then, in the second place, inspectors of voluntary associations cannot insist upon any change. The only remedy insurance companies have is to refuse to insure boilers; and that, I may say, from my own personal knowledge, they do very largely. Lastly, on that point the inquiries held by the Board of Trade in regard to boiler explosions have been of enormous assistance in inducing owners to have their boilers inspected, and in many cases insured. That is important, because they have shown what danger may arise from these boilers to which no proper inspection is applied from time to time. I am really delaying the House too long. May I say one word about the Bill itself? One matter that requires

attention is the definition of boilers, which is the same as that of the 1882 Act. It is further provided in the Bill that each boiler must be registered under a separate number, and the maker's name must be marked upon it. If a boiler includes, as it would under this Bill, not only a steam-generating boiler, but every range of steam pipes, every stop valve, every cylinder, every evaporating vessel in which steam is used in this country, I must say the Bill presents us with rather a large order; and I must say that it would be very difficult, if not almost impossible, to work this Bill satisfactorily. In the next place the Bill insists on two complete examinations in the course of twelve months. I would appeal to the opinion of any practical experts on this matter whether one inspection in the twelve months is not sufficient in any ordinary case. Where there is any kind of danger inspectors certainly ought to have the right of insisting upon having another inspection; but in the ordinary way one inspection in a year is amply sufficient for the purpose. Sub-section 4 of Clause 5 of the Bill gives an inspector power to stop any unsafe boiler. The question of the safety of boilers is a highly technical matter, and there are no standards of safety at the present time recognised by experts. If you give an inspector the power to stop a boiler at any moment he chooses, do let us have a definite standard of safety. The boiler-makers clause I need not allude to, because the hon. Member does not defend it. I wonder whether the House knows what the cost of this measure is likely to be. There are estimated to be in this country some 150,000 steam-generating boilers, and if you are to include all the other kinds of vessels that would come within the definition of this Bill, you must multiply that by three, and there would be at least from 450,000 to 500,000 vessels in this country which would come under this Bill. The cost of inspection and registration of these boilers could not be less than 30s. each, and would probably be nearer £2, therefore I estimate the cost of this Bill to the country to be somewhere between three-quarters of a million and a million of money. I do not know whether, in a year when such enormous demands have been made upon the public exchequer, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would welcome or agree

to such a demand as that. At any rate, with regard to the Bill, I think it would be a pity, speaking from the position of those who are owners of factories and works, if the Board of Trade inspectors were introduced into the factories of this country. I see the right hon. the Home Secretary, and I am glad he has taken this matter in hand. In conclusion, all the figures and arguments I have used point to the increased excellence of the present system where good inspection is made; but if inspection is not compulsory, the worst boilers will escape inspection. This subject is highly technical. Firstly, there is the question of the definition of a boiler; and secondly, no definition of a boiler explosion, and no standard of safety. But there is the further question whether an extension of the present Acts would not be sufficient to meet the case before us. There is a case for inquiry, and I entirely agree that a Select Committee will best meet the case. My own suggestions with regard to this question are, that the responsibility of the boiler owners should be more clearly expressed and made known to them. I think, in the case of any explosion which causes loss of life there ought to be a formal investigation; and, in the second place, the onus should rest on the boiler owner of showing that the boiler was of suitable construction for the pressure used, and that it was properly maintained; that it was regularly inspected by a competent man, and that it was also attended to by a competent man. We are in the dark as yet as to the precise proposals of the Home Secretary in his Factory and Workshops Bill. I am led to imagine, from what he said when he introduced that Bill, that his proposals are probably as workmanlike and feasible as any yet put before the House. But we have to-day to deal with the Bill of the hon. Member for Wansbeck. If it is a question of taking that Bill or not taking it, I must say I am against it, but if it is a question of passing it *pro forma* in order that it may be sent to a Select Committee, or a question of the Home Secretary promising a Committee without passing any of that Bills dealing with the subject, then I am in favour of such a course. I apologise to the House for having trespassed so long upon their time, and thank them for the patience with which they have listened to me.

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*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.): I have listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Wansbeck in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, and recognising the moderation of his statements and his earnest desire to secure the safety of human life, if I thought this Bill would in the least degree attain that object, I would be its warmest supporter. But I believe the contrary, and therefore I am here to move that it be read a second time this day six months. The hon. Member said in his very fair speech that it was not necessary for him to prove that every boiler explosion was preventible, and he claimed that if there was even one exception to the rule that boiler explosions are not preventable, then his case was made out. I join issue with him there. I hold that it ought to be proved that boiler explosions would be prevented by this Bill. The hon. Member quoted a Report by Mr. Gray, which stated that we ought not to consider explosions accidental, when, in fact, they are never accidental. I quite agree that, practically speaking, nearly all cases of boiler explosion are not accidental. They are caused in a great many instances by the negligence or the want of skill of the persons attending to the boilers, or by negligence on the part of those who use them. But this Bill would not have the effect of preventing negligence of any of these persons. Again, Mr. Gray's Report unfortunately refers to steamship boilers only which are mostly inspected by the Department.

*MR. FENWICK: No.

*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN: Then I withdraw that. The hon. Member for Wansbeck referred to a sad explosion of a boiler which was 60 feet long. Everybody knows now that a boiler 60 feet long is quite unfitted for general work; but until that explosion took place that fact was not realised. Nobody thinks nowadays of putting in a boiler 60 feet long, and I venture to say that there is no such boiler at work in the United Kingdom at the present moment. I contend that a Board of Trade inspector is not likely to be a better judge of the safety of a boiler than the inspector appointed by the boiler owner himself. One of the great causes of these accidents is corrosion, but corrosion is not visible

from outside inspection. It can only be ascertained by drilling a hole through the boiler, and the person who has the boiler in charge, who knows the age of the boiler and the work it has done, is better able to judge when this is necessary than a person who knows nothing about it and has never seen it until he goes to inspect it. The hon. Member for Oldham spoke of the inspectors of the insurance companies not being able to insist on their recommendations being carried out; but although they cannot insist nominally, practically they can do so; because if any boiler owner refused to carry out his recommendation and an explosion were to take place, and someone were killed as the result, the jury would take a serious view of that man's position, and in all probability find him guilty of manslaughter. There are a large number of boilers of steamships inspected by Government Departments. In 1899 there were sixty-eight explosions of steamship boilers, and in twenty-six of these cases an inspection had been made. That is 38 per cent. of the whole number of boiler explosions, but the number of steamship boilers is by no means 38 per cent. of the total number of boilers. Why should this House take from the proper person, that is, the owner, the responsibility for the safety of his boilers? He is better able to judge of its safety than any inspector of the Board of Trade. Every explosion is now thoroughly inquired into by a representative of the Government, and the boiler owner is not only liable to a heavy fine if in fault, but is held criminally responsible in the event of loss of life. That responsibility would be taken away if this Bill is passed into law. The number of accidents that happen to boilers are very small, compared to those that happen in the streets of London every day. [An HON. MEMBER: No!] How would hon. Members like to have their horses and coachmen inspected every day?

MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside): They could not inspect my coachman.

*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN: The hon. Member may inspect mine. I strongly suspect that the reason for the exemption of domestic boilers is to avoid as much opposition to this Bill as possible, and the same remark applies to the

exemption of the locomotive boilers of railway companies; but I would submit that their turn will come next if this Bill becomes law. The hon. Member for Oldham estimated the number of steam-generating boilers in the country at 150,000, and he said that this Bill would include a large number of vessels containing steam, not boilers in the technical sense, making altogether between 500,000 and 600,000, and that these would have to be inspected five times every year. Now, every time that one of these boilers or vessels was inspected travelling expenses would be incurred; and it would be an under estimate to put the cost of each such inspection at 10s. So that instead of the inspection provided for in the Bill costing a quarter of a million, it would be a million and a quarter or a million and a half. I quite agree that if such a demand was made upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer he would probably not like it very much. In my opinion this Bill is certainly calculated to form a pension fund for boiler makers. [Mr. FENWICK dissented.] I quite recognise that the hon. Member's object is to save human life, but I speak of the effect of the Bill. Again, the registration provided for in the Bill would be extremely costly and troublesome, and could be of no possible use on earth that I can conceive of. Inspection may be of some use, but I cannot see what can be the use of registration. Then the Bill provides that the makers' names are to be put on every boiler. But in a great many cases this would be impossible, because owners of boilers have frequently no conception who made them, and it would be very difficult to trace out their genealogy. Then the premises in which boilers are placed are to be registered under this Bill. That implies that the boilers cannot be used in any other premises; but there are many boilers that are semi-portable, and are these never to be used after this, in different premises from which they were first placed, in the case, for instance, of a breakdown of machinery? It is provided that in certain British ships the boilers are to be subject to the same inspection as boilers on land. But there are British ships which go on long voyages, and do not come into a British port once in a year. Are they to come into a British port five times a year to have their boilers

inspected? It is certain that steamship owners would object to that. Again, the Bill provides that if an inspector pronounces a boiler not safe, and makes certain recommendations in regard to it, the owner must not, even if these recommendations are carried out, use that boiler until the inspector has seen it again. Now, the inspector may be busy elsewhere, and may not be able to make the second inspection for many days, and are the works of the boiler owner to stand idle all that time? Another objection I have to the Bill is that no provision is made for an appeal against the decision of the inspectors. Inspectors are human after all, and are likely to err very much on the safe side, so that their decision may become an insupportable burden to boiler owners. I understand that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has introduced a Factories and Workshops Bill, which will deal with this question. I thoroughly agree that some inquiry should be made, and I should not oppose a general reference to a Select Committee. But I am opposed on principle to such Bills as are now before the House. If the hon. Members in charge will agree to withdraw these Bills on the understanding that the Home Secretary will appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the whole matter, it might be possible to bring about really useful legislation. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

MR. GALLOWAY: The motion which my hon. friend has made is, I think, an extremely regrettable one, if he will forgive me for saying so; because if he proceeds to a division it will put those who generally act with him in a position that they must vote against him.

*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN: I have no intention of pressing my motion to a division if it is understood that all the Bills relating to this subject are to be referred to a Select Committee, or that the promoters of these Bills will withdraw them, accepting the assurance of the right hon. the Home Secretary that he will appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the whole question, and I hope that the latter course will be taken.

MR. GALLOWAY: That explanation was desirable, otherwise it might have

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been thought that the hon. Gentleman desired to burke discussion and to prejudice the inquiry which I understand the Government are going to concede. When these various Bills appeared on the Paper I immediately put down a motion for a Select Committee, for I am sure that everybody who has considered this question must have felt that anything that could be done to avoid a single explosion, to prevent a single accident, or to save a single life ought to be done, no matter what the inconvenience of carrying out such a recommendation would be. The hon. Member for Shipley suggested that all these explosions arose from preventable causes. If that were so, I venture to think that they ought not to be called accidents at all. But I do not believe that is the case. I believe that many of them do arise from absolutely unpreventable causes. What is required is some system by which very great precautions should be adopted, and in many cases these accidents would then be prevented. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton has pointed out a great many objections to the Bill, with many of which I cordially agree, and pointed out that there were many points for the consideration of a Select Committee. Whether compulsory insurance is the only other remedy I am not prepared to say, because however anxious the insurance companies might be to inspect boilers thoroughly they could not cover the whole of the ground. What they undertake is well done, and naturally must be well done in their own interest, but they cannot cover everything. I hope this Bill will not be pressed to a Second Reading, but that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary will undertake that a Select Committee shall be appointed to consider the whole question. If he can see his way to give us such an assurance, and that the Committee shall be appointed at once, I think hon. Gentlemen would be well advised not to press this Bill further.

*MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Gentleman second the rejection?

MR. GALLOWAY: No, Sir.

*MR. SPEAKER: I assumed that he proposed to do so, or I should not have called on him.

MR. GALLOWAY: I beg your pardon, Sir, and I apologise.

COLONEL PILKINGTON (Lancashire, Newton): I rise to second the rejection of this Bill. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division has made a careful speech, in which he has pointed out that one of the first objects of the Bill is the protection of life and property. Although I feel that all of us are desirous of the safety of the workpeople throughout the country, and wherever the scope of the Bill may come in, still I think the debate has shown us, so far, that the workpeople are wonderfully safeguarded even at present. The speech of the hon. Member for Oldham in this House was not only an able speech, but it conclusively showed a very great decrease in the number of accidents and the number of deaths from explosions. When we consider the enormous number of boilers and machinery in use from fifty years ago until now, the number of deaths seems now to be brought almost to vanishing point, and the question arises whether legislation of the kind suggested in this Bill is advisable. I do not see that this Bill would have any beneficial effect. It does seem to me that, unless some very strong reason can be shown for the passing of this Bill, we ought to hesitate very seriously, because it has been shown by former speakers that not only is the number of accidents very small, but the expense to the country associated with the proposals put forward would be very great. It was estimated by one speaker at three-quarters of a million and by another at a quarter of a million. Whatever the amount, it is clear that the expense involved would be very great. Surely there are reasons why we should hesitate. In the first place, we have legislation which has been passed from time to time, and which is carried into effect by inspectors of mines who are under the Home Secretary, and those connected with mines and collieries are continually having visits from these inspectors and having recommendations from them, and we are certainly looked after and inspected in a most close and careful way. If it is not a question of collieries and mines, we come under the observation of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Factories. They enter works coming under the Act whenever they like, and

the inspection is continuous and has been now for many years. On top of all this legislation you have the Workmen's Compensation Act, which places the manufacturers under the necessity in their own interests of seeing that their plant is in every way up to the mark, because if there should be any death or accident owing to the plant not being good, the employer of labour has to pay compensation to the workman or his friends. Then there is another point which I hope will come before the Select Committee, and that is the question whether the inspectors to be appointed ought to be under the Board of Trade. We have Her Majesty's Inspectors of Mines and Factories, and they are a most efficient body of men, and it seems to me that inspection of boilers, if there is to be any, ought to come either under the Inspectors of Mines or the Inspectors of Factories. With new inspectors under the Board of Trade it would happen with some people that they would have three sets of inspectors coming into their works. There is another reason why I think the suggestion made about the Select Committee is a desirable one. When any change is made in the law in this matter it ought to be the result of a Bill brought in by the Government. What manufacturers and colliery proprietors feel is that when changes of the law under such heads are considered, they ought to come not as the result of a private Bill, but as a Bill brought in by the Government. I trust this will be the case with this subject when it is considered, and that when it is legislated upon it will be done by the Government. I quite understand and thoroughly appreciate some of the suggestions made by the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of this Bill; but it is because I desired to express these views on the subject that I rose to second the rejection of the Bill.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir Alfred Hickman.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. JONATHAN SAMUEL (Stockton): Whenever there is a suggestion

made for an improvement of the law in reference to the personal qualifications of boiler attendants or for the improvement of registration and inspection, we can always depend on the hon. Member for West Wolverhampton to move the rejection of the Bill. I think the hon. Member for Wansbeck has made out a strong case for the principle of this measure, and I felt it was no use attempting to argue the case, because the Government in the new Factory and Workshops Bill have admitted the necessity of a change in the law with respect to the registration and inspection of boilers. When we look to the matter of local administration with reference to infectious diseases, or the inspection and registration of lodging houses—wherever human life is at stake, as it is at stake in those two cases—the Government have insisted that human life should be protected and that there should be registration and inspection. Now in this case anyone who has read the reports of the inspectors under the Act of 1882 must admit that year by year the case is made stronger, not only for the Bill which is before the House at the present time, but also for the Bill of which I am in charge—that is with respect to the personal qualification of the men in charge of boilers. I think to strengthen the case, if it were necessary to strengthen it, there is the report of an inquest held at Sheffield on 23rd November last year with respect to a boiler explosion which took place in that town, when eleven lives were lost. There was very important evidence brought before that inquest, and the recommendation and summing up of the coroner was so strong that he expressed the opinion that the time had arrived when Government should take action in this matter so as to bring about the registration and inspection of boilers. When I introduced my Bill in 1897 the Under Secretary for the Home Department stated in reply on behalf of the Government that if we could show where accidents occurred through the lack of personal qualification of the attendant, or anything that would save human life or injury to any person, he would endeavour to bring in a measure to repair the defect in the law. Here is a case I have in addition to that I have already quoted—the explosion which took place in Sheffield—where seven lives were lost, and where the coroner expressly commented on the

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want of legislation in this matter. In reference to the very able and cogent speech of the hon. Member for Oldham—a speech which the House listened to with a very great amount of pleasure, because it showed a thorough grasp of the whole subject—there were certain conclusions which I think we, who support this measure, are entitled somewhat to challenge. He spoke of the enormous cost which would be entailed if the Board of Trade were to undertake the inspection, and he fixed it at between £750,000 and £1,000,000. I am given to understand at the present time that when inspection takes place under any of the insurance companies the charge averages 30s. per boiler, and that cost is paid by the owners of the boilers. ["No."] By whom then?

AN HON. MEMBER: The insurance companies, and they put it on the premium.

MR. JONATHAN SAMUEL: They give a certificate showing that the boiler is safe. What I was going to point out is this: I demur entirely to that estimate, because it is a most extravagant one. ["No."] Well, I have some experience of boilers myself. I think it would be a very easy matter for an inspector to inspect a number of boilers without putting the Government to a cost of 30s. per boiler. ["No."] In any case, suppose that the Government did undertake to do this work free of cost to the owners which they are at present called upon to pay, then I say it is an argument in favour of the Government undertaking this work. I am quite sure the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary would not introduce the principle of this Bill in the new Factory and Workshops Bill which the other evening he announced his intention of doing, unless the Government had taken into consideration the cost and had foreshadowed what the expense would be. But in any case I think the House will agree that when we can save human life and injury to individuals and destruction of property, then it is right that the Government should do it whatever the cost may be. I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman one question. I am in charge of the Bill the

Second Reading of which was carried in 1897.* It is the fifth or sixth year of it. That is the Bill in reference to the personal qualification of boiler attendants. I have quoted the opinion expressed by the Under Secretary. In the Barking case last year there were ten lives lost, I believe twenty-seven were injured, and there was great destruction of property. In the Board of Trade inquiry, which was a very lengthy one, they found that the explosion was entirely due to ignorance and want of proper attention. Now, here is a case where it is brought home to the Government that the explosion was entirely due to the fact that the man in charge of the boiler was ignorant of his work. I want to know from the right hon. Gentleman whether he is prepared to accept the offer that has been made by the hon. Member for Wansbeck—to accept the Second Reading of my Bill and then refer it to a Select Committee, so that the whole question of registration, inspection, and personal qualification may be taken into consideration.

*SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH, BART. (Manchester, N.W.): It seems to me that there is a consensus of opinion gradually accumulating that this subject on which we are engaged this afternoon should be referred to a Select Committee of some sort or other. I will not trespass on the House except for a few moments, but perhaps I will be allowed to say a few words. I am inclined to think, and I think it is agreed, that the Bill I introduced in 1892 was the first effort to deal with the question at all. I have given a good deal of consideration to the whole question. I am in thorough agreement with the hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of the Bill, and others who have spoken, that the time has arrived when some additional legislation is required, and, that being the case, the only question is what form that legislation is to take. There are some who think that some extension of the present Explosions Act, by which an investigation by the Board of Trade is made is sufficient. I agree with those who feel that we might take a step further forward and endeavour to prevent rather than inquire into an explosion after

it has taken place. I think since 1890 great good has arisen, and there has been a decrease in the number of explosions. At the same time, I am bound to say I think the Bill before us is rather too drastic—unnecessarily drastic, cumbrous, and costly—and would provoke an amount of opposition which will defeat the objects of the hon. Members. A Bill could be framed which will produce the same effect—a tentative measure—without that opposition and without vexatious interference with trade. What we really want, in the first place, is a registration of boilers. The introduction of inspectors of the Board of Trade would certainly meet with a great deal of opposition, and I am not quite sure that they are the best people to inspect these boilers. I have heard criticisms made on the boiler insurance associations. I believe they have done an immense good work in this direction, and I think they would be the very first to admit that they are crippled in their action, and cannot do as much as they might do owing to the circumstances in which they are placed. Reference was made to the Redcar explosion, in which it was stated that it was under the inspection of one of the boiler insurance companies. I know the company. It is managed by able men with an earnest desire to do their duty. It was pointed out that notwithstanding this inspection the explosion took place. But you will find in the evidence before the Board of Trade that the engineers of the boiler insurance company had impressed on the owners over and over again that the boilers were not in a condition to be considered safe. The company to which I refer actually protested against these boilers and endeavoured to get the owners to change them, but they were not able to effect that object. Whether they would have been right in withdrawing their insurance I am not able to say. It is very difficult to draw the line and say when that should take place. If they had had to give a certificate of safety they would not have given that certificate, and that would at once have brought the whole matter to a conclusion. I am inclined to think these insurance companies furnish the very best experts to be found for that kind of work. I would not suggest that it should be limited entirely to them. No doubt there are many local engineers who would be prepared to inspect and give certificates, and

* The Steam Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill. For Second Reading Debate see *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. xlvii., p. 625.

do it honestly. With regard to the part withdrawn in reference to the boiler-makers, I am not sure that they are the best experts in finding out faults. Those engaged daily in this work are the best experts you could get. Under these circumstances I could not vote for the Bill of the hon. Member. I believe there are other ways in which the matter might be dealt with. As the matter of referring these Bills to a Select Committee has been raised, I would say that all the Bills ought to be before any Committee which is appointed. I was of opinion at one time that a Select Committee was not necessary. I think the Government itself might frame a Bill that would give general satisfaction with the materials before them. But if they think it desirable to appoint a Select Committee before bringing in a Bill I have no objection to that. I think that it would be well if the right hon. Gentleman saw no objection that the clause he has prepared in his Factory Bill should also be referred to the same Committee.

*MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars): An hon. Member on the other side said the Home Secretary should agree to refer the subject to a Select Committee on condition that the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division withdrew his Bill. I think that would not put the question forward but put it back. Let him give my hon. friend's Bill a Second Reading and refer it to a Select Committee, and then send the other Bills on the Paper to-day to the same Committee. The Committee will then agree upon proper terms for a Bill, as there is no doubt whatever that a complete case has been made out for legislation which we shall accept in such a form as the Select Committee may determine and advise the House. But if the Bill is not read a second time and referred to the Committee, then the Committee will merely have an abstract question before them, and their Report will leave us little further forward than we have been for many years past. The question has been longer before the House than the hon. Member for Manchester has said. It has been before the House since 1889, as I introduced a Bill in that year for the compulsory examination and registration of boilers. I therefore would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to give my hon. friend's Bill a Second Reading and send it to a Select Com-

mittee. We should then have this subject put before us in the form of an acceptable Bill which would bring this long pending question to a conclusion.

*MR. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.): While I sympathise with the object aimed at in the Bill of the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division, at the same time there are two sides to this question. While on the one hand it has been argued that great advantage would accrue from the passing of a Bill of this kind, and that the protection would be greater if such a Bill became law, on the other hand it can be justly argued that the passing of a Bill of this kind, instituting a general system of inspection, would diminish individual responsibility of those who are at present responsible for the employment of labour. It is not at all improbable that the providing of a general system of inspection throughout the country would diminish that sense of individual responsibility, and the passing of the measure would really and truly, as regards explosions, not be preventative. The admirable speech of the hon. Member for Oldham was an interesting contribution to the discussion of the subject, and I should like to recall the attention of the House for a moment or two to the figures he gave. I do not think the figures placed before us in regard to the total number of boilers in the country at all representative of the true facts of the case. I should like to point out that the definition of "boiler" in the Bill of the hon. Member for Wansbeck is a very inclusive one. It is perfectly obvious that the definition includes an enormous amount of machinery and vessels throughout the country which have nothing whatever to do with the generating of steam, and are habitually worked at a very low pressure. I see there is no reference in this Bill to the question of pressure. Agricultural boilers would come under the operation of this Bill, and would be one of the most important items in the expense of working the Bill. Speaking as an employer of labour I hesitate to give my assent to the inspection of all the boilers five times a year which would come within the scope of the definition given in the Bill, however subsidiary their character may be. An inspection twice a year would involve immense expense to the public and the employment

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of an immense body of inspectors to carry out the work. I shall give an instance as regards my own factory. There are five generating steam-boilers, but there would certainly be over a hundred vessels subject to this inspection five times a year. I am quite certain that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be very unwilling to face such an expenditure. I think the hon. Member for Oldham said it would cost £750,000. I myself believe it would involve a larger expenditure than that, if it is to be carried out in such a manner as it ought to be. In land boilers the average number of accidents in the last five years was thirteen, and the average annual number of deaths six. The cost of inspection would be altogether incommensurate with the result to be accomplished. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division quoted from the Report of Mr. Gray, but I wish to call attention to the fact that that gentleman was an inspector of the Board of Trade in connection with marine boilers, and therefore the Report and the deduction drawn from the Report do not apply when dealing with land boilers. I am not sure that the admirable speech to which I have already referred did not suggest that there was another method by which something might be accomplished, and perhaps more economically and effectively, and that was by a compulsory system of boiler insurance. That would be brought before the Select Committee for consideration if the Committee should be appointed. I believe the Bill to be wrong in principle, unfortunate in the manner in which it has been brought out, and while as between the two Bills on the Paper I have greater admiration for the Bill of the hon. Member for North-west Manchester, I think it would be much better, if the reference is to be made, that it should be made as broad as possible. I would appeal to my right hon. friend the Home Secretary to proceed with the clause dealing with this subject in his Factory and Workshops Bill. These other Bills suggest that the system of inspection is to be carried out by the Board of Trade. As an employer of labour, I would urge upon the attention of the House that factories at present are entirely under the Home Office, and any system of inspection of factory boilers should be under the Home Secretary and not the Board of Trade. We know the officials we have to deal with. If you

introduce a fresh staff of officials you will certainly duplicate the work, and you would have an official from the Home Office for one purpose and an official from the Board of Trade for another.

*MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): So many excellent speeches have been made in support of one or other, and in some cases of all, the Bills dealing with boiler explosions that there is very little room for one to add much to the discussion, and consequently I shall cut out many of the observations I had intended to make as to the necessity of something being done. I would appeal to the Home Secretary not to respond to the appeal of the hon. Member for Renfrew not to accept the Second Reading of these Bills, and to let the Select Committee consider the whole matter. I would be pleased to hear that all the Bills would get a Second Reading to-day. I would not object to the Bill of the hon. Member for Stockton being referred to the same Committee. I do not think that well-informed opinion, and, above all, the facts, confirm the view of the hon. Member for Renfrew that if more legislation on this subject is resorted to the individual responsibility of the good boiler owner will be diminished. It seems to me that the hon. Member for Oldham, in his admirable speech, by one or two figures knocked the bottom out of this contention altogether. I recognise his authority above all others, and what did he say? He says that seven boilers per annum exploded that were insured and inspected, and that twenty-one boilers neither inspected nor insured also exploded. Now it seems to me that on such excellent authority as the hon. Member for Oldham, we have here a complete and direct answer to the fears of the hon. Member for Renfrew. The hon. Member referred to the case of agricultural boilers. We have heard to-day from practical men that if there is one class of boiler which ought to be included in boiler inspection and registration, surely it is the agricultural boiler, which is very frequently the source of many avoidable explosions. I am of opinion that agricultural boilers are the most fruitful source of explosion, and the sooner they come under the supervision of the Board of Trade the better. I agree with the Member for North-west Manchester in thinking that the Government have got material for a Bill this session, and that

they could dispense with a Select Committee. If the Home Secretary were to take the Bills now before the House and information which he could get from all quarters, if he will not accept a Select Committee, he could bring in a Bill which would pass through this session. If he does not introduce a Bill, I hope all the Bills dealing with this subject will receive a Second Reading. An hon. Member has stated, on his authority as a director of a boiler insurance company, that the insurance companies, which he claimed did their work very well, positively refused to insure many boilers. Now the question I want to put to the Home Secretary is this: If that be true, and it is true, those boilers, for the very reason that they have been rejected by the insurance companies, ought to be inspected by some competent authority. I think the time has arrived, and practical men in the House will recognise it, when someone should do something in a drastic way to deal with boilers disused and rejected by good owners, and rejected by insurance companies, which find their way into the hands of second-hand dealers. There are in London and in the northern towns people who call themselves engineers' merchants, but their proper name should really be scrap-iron merchants. In their yards can be seen second-hand boilers, unsafe, and exposed for sale for long periods. During that period those boilers had been subject to corrosion and afterwards they are sold to other people and small manufacturers outside. They have not been inspected by an insurance company or Board of Trade official, and in consequence of ignorance and want of attention, a boiler which should have been originally condemned and broken up is thus very frequently a cause of an explosion. I appeal to the Home Secretary to insist upon it that where a second-hand boiler is sold after rejection by a large manufacturer, that boiler should be subjected before being put into use again to a rigorous test, and if found wanting should be condemned and broken up as being incapable of being used at all. Ably as the hon. Member for Oldham put his case, I am not so sure that the ability and vigilance of the insurance company is the absolute guarantee for safety that is often assumed. On the contrary, I believe, and right hon. Gentlemen have stated it, that over-insurance

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of ships led to unseaworthiness. It is a well-known fact that the insurance of children in some cases has induced neglect on the part of mothers, and I know that fire insurance in some cases has, to put it mildly, stimulated combustion. In the same way boiler insurance, if not vigilantly supervised, and only used as a medium for collecting premiums, might induce a slackness of inspection which might lead to a few explosions. I think the time has come for doing something to prevent boiler explosions. The whole subject offers a field for very careful inquiry, and I hope the Home Secretary will give this matter his sympathetic consideration. I cannot share the hon. Member for Oldham's view in regard to his antipathy to the Board of Trade inspection. I would prefer inspectors who were appointed by the Board of Trade or the Home Office, or at least certified by a State Department. I agree with the hon. Member for Renfrewshire that we ought to have unity of inspection, but it certainly seems to me that it would be better to have Board of Trade or Home Office inspections than insurance office inspections, for reasons which I will not go into. You ought to insist that all the companies' inspectors should be certified either by the Board of Trade or by the Home Office, and if that were done I believe some good would be effected. I object to this optional inspection in one of these Bills because it enables owners to select their own inspectors. This destroys the principle of impartiality on which real inspection should be based. It also establishes a very dangerous principle. If we adopt it we shall have mine owners asking for it to be applied to mines, and railway companies will be asking for the same thing, and if they succeed there is a strong probability that we shall have jerry-builders and slum-owners asking for inspectors to be approved of by the owners of insanitary houses. If inspection is necessary in the interests of the community the inspectors should not be selected by a section, however powerful and strong, but they should be selected by the Government in the interests of the whole community. My last point is this: I agree with the hon. Member for Oldham that we ought to have a standard of safety, and the sooner it is established the better. I do not see why the Home Office should not put their

experts at work to establish that standard. I think we ought to have a definition of what is an explosion in order to prevent the interpretation that is often given to the varying statistics presented. It seems to me that the Home Office and the Board of Trade should not allow an insurance company to do what ought properly to devolve upon it in the matter of notification to boiler owners when special occasions demand advice. We had a very dry summer a year or two ago, and there was a diminution in the amount of water usually available. Water was got from springs and from wells, where the water is chemically very bad, and its use increased the liability of explosions. When we have a very dry summer, and improper water is being used in boilers, then the Home Office ought to do what these insurance companies did, they ought to notify all the steam users to be very careful as to the source from which they drew their water. I support the hon. Member for Oldham when he asks that the figures should be brought up to date, and that foreign figures should be made accessible. I trust that, whatever is done on this subject, that we shall not have the Select Committee sitting too long, because practically all the information needed is before the House for an effective Bill, and whether the Home Secretary promises a Bill or a Select Committee, I cheerfully note the wonderful progress made on this subject and the unanimity with which manufacturers and representatives of labour have agreed in a most remarkable way about the facts. They differ as to the remedies to be applied, but they are almost unanimous as to the advisability of a Select Committee, and with that unanimity I hope the Home Office will give a sympathetic answer to this appeal, and that we shall not have to wait much longer before we have an efficient inspection of boilers established.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I think it is right that I should now intervene and express the views which the Government entertain on the Bill now before the House. I find it rather strange, as the representative of the Home Office, that I should be dealing with a Bill which contains enactments affecting the Board of Trade. The House is aware that since the Boiler Explosion Acts have been

in force they have been administered, and, I think, administered satisfactorily, by the Board of Trade. At the same time the Department over which I have the honour to preside has to deal with factories and mines, and, therefore, it is most reasonable and right that the Home Office should take some considerable part in dealing with boilers, for many are likely to be found in those places. I think I have shown my sense of the desirability that something should be done in this direction by having inserted in the Factory Bill which I have had the honour of introducing to the House this session a clause which deals with boilers so far as factories are concerned. The House knows that there are several Bills before it dealing with this question of boiler inspection, and they all aim at the prevention of accidents from the explosion of boilers. Three of the Bills deal with this question by securing that boilers should be inspected periodically, that the boiler itself should be a sound and well made article, and well looked after by its owner. There is also the Bill of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockton, which has been before the House for some time, and which upon one occasion passed its Second Reading. That Bill deals with the persons in charge, and seeks to attain security from accidents by providing that the persons in charge of boilers should be properly certificated. My right hon. friend the Under Secretary took objection to such a provision some time ago, and though the House affirmed the principle on the Second Reading, it did not proceed any further with the measure. In regard to the Bill before the House I should be prepared to argue that if it only meant that something might be done upon this subject, I should have no objection to the Second Reading of the measure, but if I am held to say that I approve of the hon. Member's methods of dealing with the question as embodied in the Bill I should oppose the Second Reading. I should like to refer to one matter which the hon. Gentleman mentioned in his speech with reference to the explosion at Barking, which caused the loss of ten lives and injury to twenty-three other persons. It ought to be remembered that that accident might not have been affected in any degree by this Bill. The report which I have before me of

that accident shows that the explosion was not caused by the neglect, incompetence, or carelessness of the person in charge, but was attributable to the fact that, under what appeared to be orders from the manager of the particular works, the safety valve had been improperly arranged, and in consequence of that the explosion took place. I am not denying that there are explosions caused by the carelessness or incompetence of the persons in charge. The hon. Member who introduced this Bill in a very moderate and sensible speech said that although the Boiler Explosions Acts had had a successful effect, still, they had not done everything, and that now he based his case upon the fact that it was admitted that the periodical inspection of boilers as a preventive measure was desirable, and that it was not sufficient, even allowing for the influence brought to bear upon employers by the inquiry of the Board of Trade after the explosion had happened, that there should be only that Board of Trade examination. I think he was right in saying that this has had a very considerable effect. I listened with the greatest interest to the most able and clear speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oldham, and I congratulate the House upon his accession to our ranks. I understand him to give figures, with which I generally agree, that in spite of the fact that there has been an enormous increase in the number of boilers since the passing of the Boiler Explosions Acts, it was right to say that on the whole there had been a decrease in the number of accidents and in the number of lives lost and persons injured in consequence, partly, of the operation of those Acts. I believe that is so. But notwithstanding those facts it appears to be generally admitted to-day, by all those who have spoken in the House, that something more might be done. I believe that the figures which the hon. Gentleman gave of the proportion of explosions in inspected and uninspected boilers respectively would be sufficient to convince many of us that it is desirable in some way to secure that boilers should be periodically examined and tested, and that the best means should be at once taken to secure that they shall not be unsafe to human life. The hon. Member also said that, in any system of boiler insurance it is the worst boilers that escape. It is not the boilers of the most

careful men we want to touch at all, but it is the worst boilers, because they are in the hands generally of careless or incompetent or impecunious persons, and not being properly looked after, are a source of risk not only to those immediately in charge of them but also to those residing close by. I observe from the last report made by the Board of Trade, that in eight cases out of sixty-eight cases last year, it was found by the court dealing with the facts put before them that there had been a want of proper care which had caused the accident. I think all the facts before us justify what appears to be the general conclusion of the House that it is desirable to provide in some way or other that some means should be devised for providing greater security against accidents from boilers. I am prepared, therefore, on behalf of the Government, to assent to that principle, and I have embodied it in a clause in the Factory Bill which I have introduced, and which, I am sorry to say, has not yet been printed. When I come to the provisions of the particular Bill of the hon. Member I confess it is one which presents very great difficulties. There are a very great number of objections to be taken to the Bill of the hon. Member, and, although I accept it as meaning that something should be done and ought to be done, I may say that I cannot conceive of any Government undertaking compulsory Government inspection and certifying of boilers all over the United Kingdom, which would be necessary under this Bill. I am confident that no Government would assent to that even if there were not involved in it the taking away of the responsibility of the owner. It is the owner and the person who employs the steam-generating or other boilers upon whom should be thrown the responsibility for the safety of the boiler which he uses. It is a far different thing to enforce that responsibility by Government inspection from taking away that responsibility altogether. The provisions of our Factories and Mines Acts are generally based upon this principle: that you lay down certain regulations which must be conformed to at the expense and upon the responsibility of factory and mine owners, and the Government inspectors come in not to give a certificate but to see that the provisions of the law are complied with: and although I agree that it is desirable

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that the Government should enforce by proper means the provisions which the law and the Government may think fit to adopt for the safety of our boilers, to do so by issuing the rules which are to be obeyed and providing a Government inspection is a very different thing from giving a certificate which will relieve the responsibility of the owner. Part of the Bill of the hon. Member for Stockton deals with the persons who are responsible and actually engaged in managing those boilers, and they all deal with the subject in the way of compulsory inspection or registration. As I have said, it appears to me that the Bill of the hon. Member presents very considerable difficulties from the point of view of relieving the owner of responsibility, and it contains machinery to which I should not like in principle to assent. The Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North-west Manchester, who is a pioneer in this movement, and whose Bill has often been before the House, proceeds rather more in the direction of throwing the responsibility on the owner, and the Bill of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockton runs upon somewhat similar lines. As regards the clause in my Factory Bill which, perhaps, I may mention, although I have no right to insist upon it in this debate, I propose to follow very closely the analogy of the general rules under the Coal Mines Act, which I think have been satisfactory, and the special rules which are, under the Home Office, applicable to quarries. It provides that every boiler must have attached to it a proper safety-valve, steam gauge, and water gauge; that it must be cleaned out and examined internally by a competent person at least once every three months; that it must be internally and externally examined by a competent engineer at least once in every twelve months; and that every such safety valve and gauge must be maintained in a proper condition, and that the person making the examination in pursuance of the section must forthwith enter in a register prescribed for the purpose the particulars of the result of his examination. Then there is a penalty for non-compliance with the regulation. Of course, that only applies to factories, and it does not cover the general question which the hon. Member desires to deal with. I think, and I believe it is the opinion of the House, that the general

question ought to be dealt with, and it occurs to me that the best way of doing it would be to have a Select Committee, and the Government are prepared to undertake to propose a Select Committee upon the whole question. I think it would be much better that the whole question should be so referred, rather than a particular Bill should be read a second time and referred to that Committee, because in that case the Committee would be then compelled to proceed within the lines of the Bill. With reference to the clause in the Factory Bill which I have introduced, that also will come under the discussion of the Select Committee, although I confess I very much wish that that clause might have become law this session. I still hope that it may do so, and I hope that the Select Committee will not take so very long considering the proposals before it comes to some decision. I am prepared to promise the hon. Gentleman, if he will withdraw his Bill and not press the Second Reading, that the Government will propose a Select Committee to deal with the whole question, and then we shall be in a position to consider all the proposals which are, or have been recently, before the House in reference to this matter, and I trust and hope that no time will be lost before the Committee will meet and the subject be dealt with. I understand that the Committee would have power to send for papers and take evidence, but if there is any difficulty as to the terms of the reference I will undertake that there shall be referred to that Committee specially any Bills which have been withdrawn, and which it is desirable should be considered by that Committee. I think the Committee would be in a better position to deal with the whole question, for it would then have before it all the proposals which have been made in Parliament, and this, I think, would be by far the most satisfactory way of dealing with it.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): There seems to be a general agreement and a general opinion that the law can do more to prevent these accidents, and after what has been said by the Home Secretary it is not necessary for me to enter into a detailed examination in regard to the remedies suggested in this Bill, or as explained by the various speeches which

have been made. I think one may fairly say that the fact that there are three or four Bills now before the House upon this subject shows that there is a very widespread interest in this subject, and it is quite time the Government took it up. We are in these cases in a perpetual dilemma between Government interference on the one hand and the danger of removing individual responsibility on the other. I do not believe it will ever be possible to find a general principle to guide us satisfactorily between the two extremes of this dilemma. All we can do is, in each case, to try and reconcile individual responsibility with so much Government interference as is necessary to deal with the evil. If we look back forty or sixty years it will be found that we have always had to accept the doctrines of both sides and endeavour to steer between them. That is the reason why we should have a great deal of inquiry into the present case, and I am inclined to think that the course suggested by the Home Secretary is probably the best course to take. I know there are some objections to this Bill. It would involve very great expense, and it might remove individual responsibility. The Bill of the hon. Member for North-west Manchester does not go quite so far; but I am not sure that some objection might not be taken to that Bill also. I am inclined to think that a *prima facie* case has been made out for taking further precautions with regard to the safety of persons in charge of boilers, and if the Government had decided not to refer these Bills to a Select Committee I should have entered a strong plea for taking that course. The Home Secretary has made a proposal which will, to some extent, meet the case, and it is that all these Bills should be referred to the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman does not want the Government to appear to be bound by adopting the Second Reading of any particular Bill, and he feels that if he assented to it he might be pressed to endeavour to obtain the Second Reading of the Bills which have a parallel claim to come before the Committee. He suggests that there should be an inquiry into the whole subject, and that the Committee should inquire into the various schemes before the House. I think that is a fair proposal, and I hope my hon. friend the Member for the Wansbeck Division will see his way to accept it. According to the

Mr. Bryce.

pledge of the Home Secretary, the Government will endeavour to deal properly with the whole matter. I hope the Home Secretary will go on with his clause in the Factory Bill. It is a clause which, though it may require some amendment, is in the main a satisfactory clause, and it holds out the prospect of being made a useful and workable scheme. At the same time it would be a great advantage to us to have an examination of the whole question. Let me say one word about the Department proposed to deal with the matter. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division proposes that this question should be dealt with by the Board of Trade. It is quite true that the Board of Trade has to inspect railways and merchant shipping. But the Board of Trade undertakes no inspection of this kind in regard to boilers except in relation to inquiries after explosions have happened, and these have the valuable result of making owners more careful to prevent accidents. I do not think the Board of Trade is the best Department for this work. If there is to be an inspection it should be taken up by the Home Office, which already sends its inspectors into the factories, and it would be obviously absurd that the Board of Trade inspector should go into factories for one purpose and the Home Office inspectors should go into the same factories for another purpose. I think my hon. friend, and the hon. Member for North-west Manchester, and others who have brought in Bills may be congratulated upon having gained a distinct step in the consideration of this question. We have had a debate conducted in a spirit of compromise and agreement upon many principles, and it has drawn from the Home Secretary a promise that the matter will be considered at once. I hope he will have the Committee appointed as soon as possible, for I believe it will help greatly towards a settlement of the question, and I trust that the Committee will be able to report before the right hon. Gentleman introduces his own Bill. *

*MR. FENWICK: I desire to acknowledge the way in which the Home Secretary has met me in dealing with this question. There has been shown in the debate this afternoon a very wonderful consensus of opinion in favour of some sort of inquiry, and even stronger than that; they are of opinion that something

more should be done to alter the law in this respect. I admit frankly the very generous spirit in which he has met me. I could scarcely expect him to agree with me in my desire to increase the number of inspectors in his Department, but considering that the provisions of the Act of 1882 have all along been administered by the Board of Trade, I thought it was the right and proper Department for dealing with this question. I only wish to say that I hope we shall find a proper solution of this difficulty, and as the right hon. Gentleman has already pledged himself to do all he can to facilitate the appointment of this Committee and to expedite the inquiry, I beg leave to withdraw my motion.

*SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I desire to say that I do not share the fears entertained by my hon. friend the Member for Battersea with regard to the influence of boiler insurance companies. I have had a very long and large experience of boiler insurance companies, and I have to express my gratitude for the work that they have done not only on behalf of my firm, but for the whole country. I am glad that this Bill does not exclude agricultural boilers, for I have heard from gentlemen in the service of my firm who have visited the works where agricultural boilers are made that such boilers come in for the purpose of repair in a state which is absolutely appalling. Those boilers are worked by men who work at a long distance from any help, and they are men of the lowest type of engineers, and these are just the boilers that ought to be insured and inspected. I desire to say a few words in corroboration of what has fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Renfrewshire, and to urge upon the right hon. Gentleman that he should reconsider his definition of a boiler. It is referred to in this Bill as being taken from the Boiler Explosions Act, and for that he is responsible.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: No; the Board of Trade are responsible for that.

*SIR JOHN BRUNNER: I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider

it for this reason. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Renfrewshire has spoken of the very large number of boilers which will come under the present definition of a boiler. There are in the works of my firm an almost uncountable number of vessels which would come under the definition of a boiler, and there is no inspector in the right hon. Gentleman's Department or under the Board of Trade who would not be absolutely bewildered to come into our works and say which is and which is not a boiler. One word as to the standard of safety alluded to by my hon. friend the Member for Battersea. I may inform him that if the sixty-four boilers which work in a row at my works in Cheshire were subjected to the standard of safety under the Board of Trade that there is not one of them that would not be condemned.

MR. FENWICK: All the more necessity for them being inspected.

*SIR JOHN BRUNNER: But they are inspected, and there are no boilers which are more carefully inspected, not only by the insurance company, but also by the highly skilled technical staff in the employment of my firm. Those boilers would be condemned under the Board of Trade rules, the reason being that because they are kept in such a good condition they last longer than the Board of Trade allow a boiler to be used. The fuel in these boilers is supplied with absolute regularity from the 1st of January to the end of December; they are fed with water which is carefully purified, and there is no corrosion, a leak is very rare, and they are the safest boilers in the country. Our boilers go on month after month, and when they are cleaned they are found to be as good as at the last period of inspection, and I ask the right hon. Gentleman not to put his proposal forward as an absolute and fixed rule. Let him give his inspectors, who should be thoroughly capable men, the right to say whether a boiler shall be stopped or not. I am pleased that the Member for Wansbeck has withdrawn his motion, and I strongly disapprove of his proposal that inspectors should all be men who have undergone five years apprenticeship at boiler making. Let us get rid of this old rule-

of-thumb system, and let our business be governed by intelligent men.

*COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): There is only one point which I desire to take up, and that is with regard to agricultural accidents, for it has been stated that these are in a great measure due to defective agricultural boilers. I have been through the list of accidents given in the last Report issued, which gives the various trades in which these accidents happened. I find that, so far from bearing out the impression conveyed to "the unsophisticated mind" of the hon. Member for Battersea, most of the accidents recorded prove the contrary. Out of 18 accidents recorded there was only one killed from anything that could be traced to an agricultural boiler or machinery used solely for agricultural purposes. Out of 68 accidents, in which 36 persons were killed, only five were directly or indirectly traceable to accidents happening with agricultural machinery. It is not fair to bring before the House such a statement, because it casts an undeserved slur—although it may have not been intended as such—upon a very worthy body of men, worthy because they include myself, who employ machinery for agricultural purposes. I can assure hon. Members that farmers for their own sake are extremely careful as to the class of machinery they use. There are, I know, a small proportion of cases where inferior boilers are used, but this is the exception, and the majority of threshing machines and chaff and hay-cutting machines, and other machinery used for agricultural purposes are, I believe, in quite as good a state as the ordinary class of boiler. I do not wish to enter into the question now as to the inspection of boilers, which has been gone into so fully, but I do maintain that you have no right to charge agricultural employers with employing an inferior class of machinery, and openly accusing them of exposing their men to dangers which they can prevent.

*MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): I do not often find myself in agreement with the hon. Baronet the Member for Northwich, but I think he has made out a strong case against the rejection of this Bill. I do not believe employers of labour in these

Sir John Brunner.

days will run any unnecessary risk, for they have to face the Compensation Act, and the odium which would attach to an employer who ran unnecessary risks would be such that it would not be worth his while to do so. I only rise to ask my right hon. friend the Home Secretary whether he will take care in appointing the Select Committee to put members upon it who are not either supporters or opponents of the Bill. My experience of Select Committees is that they are generally formed of people who are partisans, and I do not think that that is the best way to come to a right decision upon a Bill. I think the members of the Committee should be people who have no interest in the measure, and who have not prejudged it.

*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN: With the permission of the House, I beg leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

OUTDOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

OLD AGE PENSIONS BILL.

Order for the Second Reading read.

SIR J. FORTESCUE FLANNERY: This question of old age pensions is one which should be placed above and beyond party politics. In the general election of 1895 prominence was given to subjects of a social character, including the question of old age pensions. My right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary has spoken on this subject with all his lucidity and vigour, and Lord Salisbury, speaking upon the same subject, invented the phrase of "social amelioration," which has

become historical. That phrase was echoed and re-echoed throughout the country, and I have no hesitation in saying that the promise of social amelioration in their programme had very much to do with the return of the Unionist party at the general election of 1895. [Opposition cries of "Hear, hear!"] I am glad to hear those cheers from hon. gentlemen opposite, because I should like to add that the great majority of those promises have been fulfilled. There is no part of the social programme which received more general attention than the proposal for old age pensions. I have had the honour of serving on a Select Committee under the chairmanship of my right hon. friend upon this question. I think we may start with the proposition that it is as much the duty of the community to succour the helpless as to punish the idle and the evildoer, and to distinguish between idleness on the one hand and deserving helplessness on the other. That differentiation at present solely consists of the distinction between giving poor law relief inside the workhouse and giving outdoor relief outside the workhouse. Guardians may give relief absolutely at their discretion, and outside the workhouse they use that discretion with great benevolence. Guardians may make allowance in money or provisions outside the workhouse, or they may compel the applicant to enter the workhouse, with all its discipline and degradation. But whether relief is given inside or outside of the workhouse it is accepted as a badge of disgrace, and with indifference and with a sense of shame and humiliation, by the deserving and the thrifty who have fallen by misfortune. The workhouse test was begun early in the century for the purpose of stopping the shameful corruption and abuse of outdoor relief by the able bodied. I have spoken of the discipline and degradation of the interior of the workhouse. I do not blame poor law guardians, because there must be discipline, and the circumstances of the case involve the degradation. The unavoidable herding together night and day of the idle with the indus-

trious, of the religious with the obscene, of the virtuous with the profligate, the respectable with the dissolute, of the drunkard and the unreformed criminal side by side with the moral and industrious, is a scandal which it is the duty of this House to ameliorate as quickly as possible. In a few workhouses a system of classification has been established, but the cost and want of accommodation would make it impossible to have that system extended as people would like to see it extended. There is one remarkable circumstance upon this question of expense which I have no doubt is the reason why it is not pursued by the Government this session. The question of expense shows a remarkable contrast between the decreasing number of paupers and the increasing cost of maintaining them. In 1874 there were 820,446 paupers in England and Wales, and in 1897 there were 814,887; so that in 1897 there were 12,559 fewer receiving relief in England and Wales than there were in 1874, and, yet the cost increased from £7,664,959 to £10,432,189. The cost of relieving each pauper in 1874 was £9 5s. per head, but in 1897 it increased to £12 16s per head, and I believe I am justified in saying that since 1897 the cost has still further increased. This herding together of the deserving and undeserving is a scandal which cannot be remedied by an extension of outdoor relief. A suggestion was made that all old persons above sixty-five years of age should receive outdoor relief as a matter of course, and it was suggested that that would largely settle the question. I respectfully suggest that it is not possible to look to the poor law system for the settlement of this question. To fulfil the suggestions to which I have referred there must be something in the nature of an independent pension for the aged, dissociated from the poor law, and something in the nature of an honourable provision, for the people of this country would not feel that this question has been thoroughly dealt with unless something of this nature is provided

In the case of the poor law, if an applicant has by thrift accumulated some small saving that is a barrier to his receipt of help; but to the old age pension administrator, as distinguished from the poor law administrator, the small savings are marks of sincerity, test, and guarantees of fitness for an honourable old age pension. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who has studied this matter very closely, stated in a speech some little time ago that five-sixths of the aged paupers supported themselves without any help at all until they reached the age of sixty-four, and that their pauperism was not due to drink or idleness, but it arose from the decay of nature and senile unfitness. The elementary principle of honourable pensions for the deserving in their old age has been recognised by the community just as clearly as it has recognised the necessity for the education of our children. The dockyard workmen, the civil servants, the officers of the Army and Navy, have all made honourable provision for old age, and I claim even this afternoon, in this comparatively attenuated House, notwithstanding the importance of this great subject, that the worker who has done his best to sustain his wife and children in decent independence during the years of his labour deserves something better than is now provided for him; he deserves something better than the degradation of a pauper's livery, and the unclassified association of the workhouse. Take two aged workers. One goes to the workhouse and the other keeps out of it. The reasonableness of the principle has been universally admitted, with the exception of a certain limited number who object to the system on various grounds. There is the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University. Upon the Select Committee last year I had the honour of associating with him during its labours, and the arguments he brought forward upon that occasion were that a system of old age pensions would pauperise the workers from their youth upwards, would

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destroy filial relations, and that the assistance which those in the vigour of their youth and the full power of their earnings give to their parents would be withdrawn; that it would destroy friendly societies and other organisations for thrift; and also that such a system would lower the standard of wages and create a large number of aged pensioned electors who would press upon their Members of Parliament earlier and larger pensions. But the impossibility of making any provision for old age out of their earnings paralyses thrift. There are many men in the full vigour of life who would willingly endeavour to save if they thought it was possible that they could save effectively, but who give up in despair the attempt to save because they know that they cannot possibly save what would secure anything like comfort in their old age. Notwithstanding the boasted civilisation of this country, it is far behind other countries in regard to this question. In Germany there is an established system which has been in operation for some ten years, by which this question of succour to the aged and deserving poor is more or less completely solved. The system consists of a part contribution by the workers, part by the employers, and a part by the State. That system is not working with entire success, but there is a very great deal in it that is satisfactory. In France and Belgium old age pensions are given by the State to members of friendly societies after they reach the age of sixty-five, and in Denmark by a law passed in 1896 there is a system of old age pensions distinct from the poor law system, which very much resembles our own. In our own colony of New Zealand there is a system fully established of old age pensions by which persons reaching the age of sixty-five with incomes not over £1 per week receive a pension amounting to £18 a year. The words in the Act of Parliament which established this system in New Zealand are extremely interesting, and I will read them to the House. The Act declares—

“Whereas it is equitable that deserving colonists who during the prime of life have

helped to bear the public burdens of the colony by the payment of taxes, and to open up its resources by their labour and skill, should look to the colony for a pension in their old age."

There is the essence of the argument and the *raison d'être* of the whole question. What have we done in the mother country? We have had Royal Commissions upon this question. A Royal Commission was appointed in 1893 and it reported in 1895. The Old Age Pensions Committee, presided over by Lord Rothschild, sat for two years, and carefully sheltered itself behind the limited terms of its reference, and gave up all attempts at the solution of the subject. It said that "None of the schemes presented were free from grave inherent disadvantages." Was there ever a scheme of reform propounded which was free from grave inherent disadvantages, and was there any reason for giving up the attempt to solve the problem? Under the chairmanship of my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board last session the Committee arrived at a definite conclusion almost unanimously that this question could be easily put into legislation subject to the difficulties of a financial kind being overcome. That Committee brought forward a practical suggestion, and it was understood that those suggestions would form the subject of legislation by the Government during the present session. [Opposition cries of "Hear, hear!"] I welcome those cheers, and if hon. Members opposite are prepared to vote the necessary £10,000,000, rising to £15,000,000, I am quite ready to support them. After the Select Committee of 1899 had made its Report investigations were made, and within the last few days a Return has been printed which sets forth the result. Certain districts throughout the country were taken, and inquiries made as to the number of persons between sixty-five and seventy-five years of age who would, in all probability, come under the scheme of old age pensions. The result was that the cost was put down at something like £10,000,000 per annum, rising afterwards to £15,000,000. If that has been the reason why the Government have not proceeded this session with that

measure, I say it is not a sufficient reason, because a very considerably modified scheme might have been set up. Every year this problem is increasing in its pressure, and the drain of the workers' vitality increases, while the range of working years of a man's life becomes more limited every year, and retirement by reason of old age becomes necessary at an earlier period of life. It has been estimated that there are 2,000,000 persons over the age of sixty-five, and consequently a pension scheme would cost £30,000,000 per annum. No one would suggest that £30,000,000 could possibly be added to the fiscal burdens of this country permanently without dislocating the whole of our fiscal system, but what I ask is that a beginning shall be made. If £10,000,000 per annum is too much, let us make a beginning upon a smaller scale and do something to show that we are in earnest. Let us experiment practically by some legislation, and extend the application of the system afterwards. With regard to the Bill which I have the honour to introduce, I may say that in the session before last 120 Members of this House drew up a memorial to the Government on this question and a Select Committee was formed. This Bill was introduced last session, and it is the outcome of the labours of the members of that Committee. This Bill is to place the members of friendly societies who have reached the age of sixty-five in the position of being able to receive assistance from county councils provided they do not suffer certain disabilities, such as having received poor law relief or having been in prison within a certain period. I doubt very much if there are many hon. Members of this House who appreciate the importance of the extensive work of friendly societies in this country. There are 8,000,000 of the wealth-producing sections of the community banded together for the purpose of mutual help in times of sickness and for the purpose of preserving the self-respect of the individual, and over £30,000,000 of savings have been invested by them.

They disburse every day £14,000 in sick and funeral pay, and they save to the poor rates a sum estimated at not less than £4,000,000 annually. They are a magnificent guarantee of the thrift and the strength and stability of the people of this country. The persons eligible for pensions under this Bill are those who have shown thrift as members of any friendly society who have been clear of poor law relief for five years, who do not earn more than 5s. per week, and who have not an income of more than 16s. per week. That is a proposal which would avoid the danger of lowering wages. As to the cost, two-thirds would be provided by Parliament, and one-third by the County Council out of the rates. The procedure would be extremely simple; the applicant, being a member of the friendly society, obtains from the officers of the lodge to which he belongs papers for the purpose of making his application on reaching the age of sixty-five. They would be sent to the clerk to the county council, and afterwards placed in the hands of the friendly society, who would distribute the pension. There would be no extra cost of administration, and no army of officials would be established. The existing machinery of the friendly societies would be utilised, and there would be no leakage from that cause. The cost of the system that would be established by this Bill would be considerably less than £3,000,000 per annum, to make a beginning. What I ask the House to do is this. If it cannot give a universal pension involving an expenditure of £30,000,000 per annum, if it cannot act upon the recommendation of the Select Committee of 1899, which will take £15,000,000 a year at least to begin with, I ask the House to make a beginning upon the humble scale that I am suggesting, which would show the country that this House is in earnest, and which would be doing something to bring justice to the humbler workers, and remove what has been rightly described as one of the greatest scandals of the nineteenth century.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg leave to second the motion.

Motion made and Question proposed—
“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Sir J. Fortescue Flannery.

MR. CRIPPS (Gloucestershire, Stroud): As one of the Members who sat on the Committee last year I desire to say a few words upon this subject. I am bound to state to the House at the outset that I do not agree with a great many of the premisses of the hon. Member who has proposed this Bill this afternoon. To begin with, I do not think it has yet been shown that any scheme of old age pensions which has been proposed up to the present day would be of any advantage to the very classes whom it is proposed to benefit. In other words, like many other schemes which have been brought forward, it is nothing more, in my mind, than an extension of the principle of outdoor relief. It is one of the features of the various proposals brought forward by hon. Members in dealing with this question that no distinction has yet been drawn between what is properly a pension scheme and what is an outside extension of our poor law system of outdoor relief. Let me say at the outset that I am one of those who believe that the present system of our poor law could, in many directions, be improved with the greatest advantage, and I believe that is the direction in which we have to look for a solution of the old age problem. I am more drawn to that conclusion when I find that the scheme which is proposed in this Bill and adopted by the Committee of 1899 is not really a pension scheme at all. It is merely a creation of some new authority or some vested authority which is to apply our poor law system in a complicated manner. As regards the premisses with which my hon. friend brought forward these proposals, he seems to think it sufficient to say, “Let us have legislation of some kind or other.” That is the argument I understand he has brought forward. But let me put this to him in reply. The issue that has to be dealt with by every man who brings forward an old age pension scheme is not these general principles, but he has to put them into a practical form so as to carry out those ideas, and also allow them to be carried out at a cost and expense which is practicable and worth discussing. When you get beyond the cost or expense that can be seriously discussed in any practical form, you are holding out a sort of will-o'-the-wisp, and you are only divert-

ing attention from practical reforms which cannot be carried out under such conditions. What was the next point made by him? He talked about a prime evil which had a tendency to increase. Now that contention is quite out of accord with the evidence. That there is an evil no one denies, but I think it ought to be dealt with by the reform and improvement of our poor law system. The Committee and many hon. Members have come to the conclusion that, at the present time, even the evil which it is admitted exists is a decreasing evil, and no Committee inquired into this question more carefully than Lord Rothschild's Committee. No one who reads the Report of that Committee, and carefully considers the facts brought before it, can say that this crying evil is an increasing one at the present time. What does Lord Rothschild's Committee point out? It says that so much is this a decreasing evil that, in the opinion of that Committee, if you give time, it will be remedied by the ordinary natural increase or improvement in the condition of the working classes of this country. That is what Lord Rothschild's Commission states. It is not for me to state whether I agree with that theory or not. I do not think it can be remedied alone by the energy of the working classes, but I do agree that this old age pensions chimera is not the way to approach the true solution, but it is really diverting attention from what I may call the true reform and the true solution of this difficult question. Let me deal for a moment with the Bill of the hon. Member which he proposes this afternoon. Let me show the inconsistency with which this measure is brought forward. This Bill is precisely in the same form as that brought forward by the hon. Member last year, and it was in consequence of this Bill and others being brought forward that the Select Committee was appointed. They had to consider the whole of this question, and the result of their consideration was not to approve of this Bill but to differ from it. The hon. Member himself was a member of that Committee and approved of the Report of the majority. Therefore, in bringing forward this Bill he is out of accord with the principle and proposals adopted by that Select Committee; and why does he do this? When the scheme of the Select

Committee came to be considered I was not prepared to support it, and I was always in a minority. I never did think that the scheme was a practical one. When it came to be considered it was found by the best expert evidence that the cost was £10,000,000, growing up to £15,000,000 a year, and, so far as the Select Committee are concerned, they gave the go-by to the question of cost. Speaking for myself, I could not assent to any Report upon this topic in which the question of the cost had not been thoroughly considered. It is one of the great cruxes of this great question, and to put it on one side is attempting to solve one of our great social problems without taking into consideration the most important factor. The result is that, as soon as ever you come to apply the test of the cost, no one will get up in this House and say that we are within a measurable distance of the time when we can find £15,000,000 a year for a matter of this kind. No one will get up and make that assertion. If they do not, then the whole scheme brought forward last year by the Select Committee falls to the ground. Even if the scheme was good, it is wholly condemned when the cost is considered, for that makes it an impossible scheme. As regards the scheme which was adopted by the majority of the Committee last year, I think it clearly showed what the true direction of reform was. The proposal of the Select Committee was, in substance, this: you constituted a new authority, partly of poor law guardians and partly of representatives of other local authorities; you constituted a new authority to administer your pension scheme, and you laid down certain provisions. The result was that you gave us a second poor law authority interfering with the one already existing, and to a great extent working inconsistently with it, and wasting money by having this duplicate authority. At the present time there are poor law authorities in this country which are giving far better terms than would be possible under the old age pension scheme of last year. In the West Derby Union as much as 15s. per week is given to old people under the head of outdoor relief, whereas under last year's Bill the grant was to be only 5s. or 7s. a week, and the system was much more complicated. In fact, every single thing proposed under a scheme of this kind could be given—and given in a greater degree under our

existing poor law system, I think, than the original settlement of 1832 was a great statesmanlike settlement. I do not deny that there are weak spots in our poor law system, but do not let us shut our eyes to the fact that the cause of reform would certainly be retarded by these will-o'-the-wisp schemes of old age pensions, which, after all, are nothing but outdoor poor law relief administered by worse bodies under worse conditions. I believe no practicable scheme of old age pensions, either with regard to the methods of distribution or the amount of cost, has been devised up to the present moment. All of them up to now have gone in a quite wrong direction. In the case of such a scheme there must be hard-and-fast conditions, and Parliament must provide the money and fix the scale of the pensions. This Bill is entirely inconsistent even with the Report of the majority of the Committee which sat last year, and it ought not to be accepted on the suggestion that it is better to have bad legislation than none at all. I hope, therefore, the House will not give the Bill a Second Reading.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I cannot altogether agree with the observations of the hon. Member for Stroud, because I think the House should have an opportunity of discussing this question this session, although I think that events so far have thrown a somewhat lurid light on the prospects of any legislation this year for the benefit of the working classes. I had the privilege of being a member of the Select Committee to which the hon. Member has referred, and I voted in a minority against the adoption of the Report, mainly on the ground that the Committee had refused to go into the question of cost. Since then the question of cost has been placed before the House, and I am rather gratified to find that the figures have confirmed to a large extent the estimate I myself had made of the cost of a scheme of old age pensions more or less on the lines recommended by the Committee. There was another reason why I dissented from the Report. I am perfectly sure that it would not do to have any scheme of old age pensions in which the possibility of patronage is placed in the hands of a local authority. We must

Mr. Cripps.

have hard-and-fast rules framed, under which a pension could be claimed as a right. I am disappointed that so far we have been unable to elicit any opinion from the Government as to what they intend to do for the aged and deserving poor this session, either in regard to the Report on Old Age Pensions or in regard to the Report of the Cottage Homes Committee. The latter Committee has recommended a good deal that could be done without any very large expenditure of public funds. It recommended that a proper classification of the inmates of workhouses should be made that the aged deserving poor outside should receive adequate outdoor relief, and that those in the workhouses should constitute a special class and receive special treatment. I hope that before this debate concludes we shall get some assurance that something will be done in this direction, for much of this would not require any legislation in this House. What is wanted is a system of old age pensions to take away from the deserving poor the stigma of pauperism. A further suggestion of the Cottage Homes Committee is that for the aged and deserving there should be cottage homes apart from workhouse surroundings. These questions have cropped up incidentally in the discussion. The Bill before the House proposes a scheme which was not accepted by the Committee last year. It is, nevertheless, a happy accident that this Bill has been brought forward, because it affords an opportunity for eliciting opinions from the Government bench and from the House. Looking back on the question, and recalling the words in the Queen's Speech that the time is not opportune for such expenditure, I cannot but regret that during the years when the revenue showed a substantial surplus the Report of the previous Committee received no consideration, and the claims of the poorest classes of the community were passed over. I think that charge can be thoroughly substantiated, for over a series of years the annual surplus has been from three and a half to five and a half millions, and, according to the Report of the last Committee, the amount required for old age pensions for people over sixty-five years of age would be ten millions, and making the age seventy, about £5,900,000. Here has been an opportunity neglected, to the discredit of the Government. The surplus of any year could not have been

spent in a manner more likely to do good than in giving pensions of 5s. a week under certain conditions to the aged and deserving poor. But an unequalled opportunity has been neglected, and now social questions must be put aside because every available million is required for war expenditure. I hope that in a few years, when we have got over the strain caused by our excessive military expenditure, the Government will again take up this question, and will arrange that aged people on arriving at a certain age shall, supposing they are not disqualified by crime or by having received out-door relief, be entitled to a pension. During our recent years of prosperity a beginning might have been made with the age of seventy, and from that we could have judged how much would be saved from poor law administration. The saving will, I believe, be a progressive amount, because more and more people will be encouraged year by year to avoid poor law relief by the prospect of a pension. In conclusion, may I again express the hope that before this debate closes, we shall have some statement of policy from the Government as to old age pensions and the Cottage Homes Bill.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.) : I hope that my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board, who has been called away to receive an important deputation, will return before the debate closes. I rise merely to reply to questions that have been addressed to me as to what the Government intend to do in regard to the Report of the Cottage Homes Committee. My right hon. friend and myself have given most sympathetic consideration to the Report. Difficulties have arisen in regard to classification in workhouses from want of space. My hon. friend opposite called upon the Local Government Board to issue regulations with regard to classification, but before such regulations could be effective, space must be found, and, as he is aware, the Committee contemplated that such would be found by the exclusion of certain classes from workhouses. For the settlement of an arrangement a good deal of consultation was required between county councils and the Local Government Board, and I can assure my hon. friend

that most active and anxious consideration has been given to the subject by the Department with a view to carrying out the reforms sketched in the Report. It can scarcely be called a happy accident that brings this Bill under discussion for an hour and a half at the close of a Wednesday sitting, dealing as it does with a subject that has occupied the consideration of Royal Commissions and committees without any very satisfactory result. An accident it is, but the House will agree the time is not auspicious for legislation involving large expenditure of public money, and will not expect that such a question can be settled in an hour and a half on a Wednesday afternoon.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) : This is a social problem which was put very much in the front at the last General Election, and it secured many votes for hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. As might have been expected, the Secretary to the Local Government Board has said that the Government are not prepared to deal with this question in a serious manner at the far end of a Wednesday afternoon sitting. But may I point out that the Government have been in office for nearly five years, and during that period have not only voted large sums of money to the landlords, but have also found time and opportunity to assist and protect the interests of other classes than the poorer workmen. While the Government through the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Monday admitted the continued prosperity of the country on the one hand, they absolutely refused to allow the men who by their labour have realised that wealth to participate in it. Mr. Charles Booth tells us that in the city of London alone to-day there are no fewer than half a million workmen whose average earnings do not exceed 10s. or 15s. a week. I ask how can these men, with wives and children to maintain, make any provision for old age? It is not possible for them to pay 6d. or a 1s. a week into a friendly society. As to where the funds to provide old age pensions are to come from, I can only say that a Government which can find funds to give doles to their friends, and raise sixty millions to go to war with another country, can easily, if it has the will, tap another source of income—the taxation of ground

values—and find pensions for the aged and deserving poor. Is it not disgraceful that in this Christian country men and women who have worked hard all their lives and have never committed a crime should have the stigma of pauperism fastened on them in their declining years, and eventually find a resting place in a pauper's grave?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The Bill which it is asked should be read a second time this afternoon was only circulated this morning, and I confess that I have not yet had the opportunity of examining its provisions. Everyone must perceive therefore that this debate must be of a purely academic character. My hon. friend, before I left the House to fulfil another engagement, said that the position of the question remains the same as in last session. But there is this very important change: those who signed the Report of the Select Committee which dealt with the question last session did so subject to one condition—that there should be a further examination of the question with regard to the cost of the proposal. That examination has been made, and, as the House has been informed, the cost is estimated to be (for the scheme of the Select Committee) a sum of ten millions a year at the present time, and fifteen millions a year twenty years hence. I recognise, as regards the Government, that this is a matter of the greatest consideration. I am disposed myself to think it would, at all events, involve the consideration of some other scheme, not perhaps so complete or elaborate.

*MR. BANBURY: It will, I think, be admitted that this Bill deals with one of the most complicated of political subjects, and seeing that two Royal Commissions have been unable to solve the problem of old age pensions, how can it be expected that, after a brief debate on a Wednesday afternoon, the House of Commons will be able to do so? The hon. Member for Stepney said that many Members of this House gained votes at the last General Election by promising a scheme of old age pensions. Now, I was very careful to give no pledge or promise in regard to such a scheme, as—

Mr. Steadman.

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

WAYS AND MEANS [6TH MARCH].

Resolutions reported :—

WAR LOAN.

1. "(1) That, towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the thirty-first day of March nineteen hundred and the thirty-first day of March nineteen hundred and one, sums, not exceeding thirty-five million pounds, be raised by either or both of the following methods :—

(a) By means of the creation of stock or bonds to be redeemed within a period not exceeding ten years, and bearing interest at a rate to be fixed by the Treasury; or

(b) By means of the issue of Treasury Bills;

and that the principal and the interest on any money so raised be charged on the Consolidated Fund;

(2) That all expenses incurred in connection with raising the said sums, including any additional remuneration to the Banks of England and Ireland, be charged on the Consolidated Fund."

INCOME TAX.

2. "That Income Tax shall be charged for the year beginning the sixth day of April nineteen hundred at the rate of one shilling."

BROKERS' CONTRACT NOTES.

3. "That there shall be charged upon a note sent by any person carrying on the business of a broker to his principal advising him of the sale or purchase of any goods, wares, or merchandise, the stamp duty following (that is to say) :—

If the goods, wares, or merchandise are—

Of the value of five pounds and under the value of one hundred pounds one penny.

Of the value of one hundred pounds or upwards one shilling."

ESTATE DUTY.

4. "That in the case of a person dying after the thirty-first day of March, nineteen hundred, property real or personal in which that person or any other person had an interest limited to cease on the death of the deceased shall, for the purpose of the Finance Act, 1894, and the Acts amending that Act, be deemed to pass on the death of the deceased notwithstanding that such interest has been surrendered, assured, or otherwise disposed of during the lifetime of the deceased whether for value or not to or for the benefit of the remainderman or reversioner, except where the surrender, assurance, or disposition was *bonâ fide* made twelve months before the death of the deceased, and *bonâ fide* possession and enjoyment of the property was assumed thereunder by that remainderman or reversioner immediately upon the surrender, assurance, or disposition, and thenceforward retained to the entire exclusion of the person making the same, and of any benefit to him by contract or otherwise."

FINANCE ACT, 1894 (MODIFICATION OF EXCLUSIONS).

5. "That the exclusion of property from aggregation under section four of the Finance Act, 1894, shall cease to take effect except as regards property in which the deceased never had an interest, but that a limited abatement or return of the duty may be allowed in certain cases in the event of the aggregation with any other property of property which passes on the death of the deceased under a disposition made by a person (other than the deceased) who died before the expiration of the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four."

FINANCE ACT, 1896 (REPEAL OF EXCLUSIONS).

6. "That for the purpose of the rate and the amount of estate duty or settlement estate duty, the exclusion under section seventeen of the Finance Act, 1896, of any fraction from the principal value of the estate shall cease."

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Resolutions read a second time.

First Resolution agreed to.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to give notice that when this Bill comes on for Second Reading I will move an Instruction asking that the principle of the loan shall be so extended as to enable the colonies to participate in its responsibilities, and calling attention to the fact that while bushmen from the colonies are receiving 5s. a day, Scottish, Irish, and English soldiers only receive 1s. 3d.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James William Lowther, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Hanbury.

WAR LOAN BILL.

"To provide for raising money for the present War in South Africa," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 114.]

Subsequent Resolutions agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Gentlemen appointed to bring in a Bill upon the Resolutions reported from the Committee of Ways and Means on the 6th instant, and then agreed to by the House, that they do make provision therein pursuant to Resolutions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

ANCIENT MONUMENTS PROTECTION BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for Tuesday next.

FINANCE BILL.

"To grant certain duties of Customs and Inland Revenue, to alter other duties, and to amend the Law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue and the National Debt, and to make other provision for the financial arrangements of the year," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 115.]

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TRUCK ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Truck Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Sir Walter Foster, and Mr. Havelock Wilson.

TRUCK ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Truck Acts," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, April 4th, and to be printed. [Bill 116.]

SHOP HOURS ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Shop Hours Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Provand, Mr. Samuel Smith, and Mr. Seton-Karr.

SHOP HOURS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Shop Hours Acts," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, April 27th next, and to be printed. [Bill 117.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

First Report brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 89.]

VISIT OF THE QUEEN TO LONDON.

On the motion for the adjournment of the House,

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I wish to read two notices which

will appear in to-morrow morning's Paper. The first is that I have been requested by the Lord Steward to state that members of both Houses will be admitted, on production of their cards, within the railings of Buckingham Palace in order to witness the arrival of the Queen, which is expected to take place soon after 12.30 to-morrow.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—NEWS FROM THE FRONT.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have further to announce that the following telegram from Lord Roberts has been received at the War Office:—

"Osfontein, March 7, 4.30 p.m.

"March 7.—Our operations to-day promise to be a great success.

"The enemy occupied position four miles north and eleven miles south of Modder River.

"I placed Colville's Division on north bank, Kelly-Kenny's and Tucker's, with Cavalry Division, on south bank.

"The Cavalry Division succeeded in turning the left flank, opening the road for 6th Division, which is advancing without having been obliged to fire a shot up to present time—12 noon.

"Enemy are in full retreat toward north and east, being closely followed by cavalry, horse artillery, and mounted infantry, while the 7th (Tucker's) and 9th (Colville's Division) and Guards Brigade, under Pole-Carew, are making their way across the river at Poplar's Drift, where I propose to place my headquarters this evening.

"Our casualties will, I trust, be few, as the enemy were quite unprepared for being attacked by the flank and having their communications with Bloemfontein threatened."

Adjourned at a quarter before
Six of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 8th March, 1900.

EARL OF DESART.

Ordered and Directed, by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, That a Certificate be sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, stating that the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom has reported to the House of Lords that the right of the Earl of Desart to Vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of him the said Lord Chancellor; and that the House of Lords has ordered such report to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland; and it is hereby also Ordered, That the said Report of the said Lord Chancellor be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

THE LORD SANDHURST—Took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—

Cork Electric Tramways [H.L.].

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD BILL [H.L.].

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Orders made on the 23rd of February and on Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed.

BARNSELY CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].
Read 2^a.

BREWERY AND COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT TRUST, LIMITED, BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to order).

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Standing Order No. 92 considered (according to order), and dispensed with,
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with respect to a petition of Tipton Urban District Council: Leave given to present the said petition.

DUBLIN ELECTRIC LIGHTING BILL.

BLACKPOOL, ST. ANNE'S, AND LYTHAM TRAMWAYS BILL.

The Order of Tuesday last referring the Examiner's certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders to the Standing Orders Committee, discharged.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL [H.L.].

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

The Order made on Tuesday last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bills, discharged.

LONDON HYDRAULIC POWER COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection that the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Aston Manor Tramways Bill [H.L.] and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the London Hydraulic Power Company Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to; all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill.

ASTON MANOR TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

HIGHAM FERRERS WATER BILL [H.L.].

IPSWICH CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

LINCOLN CORPORATION (TRAMWAYS) BILL [H.L.].

MENSTONE WATER (TRANSFER) BILL [H.L.].

NEWPORT CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

NEWPORT (MONMOUTHSHIRE) GAS BILL [H.L.].

LONDON HYDRAULIC POWER COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Manners of Haddon be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Dartrey; read, and agreed to.

O

CHURCH'S PATENT BILL [H.L.]

EAST STIRLINGSHIRE WATER BILL
[H.L.]

FALKIRK AND DISTRICT WATER
BILL [H.L.]

FALKIRK CORPORATION BILL [H.L.]

MOTHERWELL WATER BILL [H.L.]

EAST SHROPSHIRE WATER BILL [H.L.]

Hemel Hempstead Corporation
(Water) Bill [H.L.]

GREAT BERKHAMPTSTAD WATER
BILL [H.L.]

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Dartrey be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Manners of Haddon; read and agreed to.

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL
ORDER BILL.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL
ORDER BILL..

Brought from the Commons.

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL
ORDER BILL [H.L.] (No. 21.)

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL
ORDER BILL [H.L.] (No. 22.)

Read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

EDINBURGH DISTRICT LUNACY
BOARD BILL [H.L.]

EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL
[H.L.]

ROTHERHITHE AND RATCLIFF
TUNNEL BILL [H.L.]

LONDON SEA WATER SUPPLY BILL
[H.L.]

SUNDERLAND CORPORATION BILL
[H.L.]

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY (STEAM
VESSELS) BILL [H.L.]

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL
[H.L.]

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; namely—

V. Falkland,
L. Colchester,
L. Blythwood,
L. Muncaster,
L. Avebury (chairman);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed

accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday, the 20th instant, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CANADA—WEST INDIES.

Agreement between the Canadian Government and Messrs. Pickford and Black to establish a steamship service between Canada and the West Indies.

CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION.

Forty-ninth Report from the Church Estates Commissioners, for the year preceding 1st March, 1900.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION (CAPITAL AND INCOME ACCOUNTS, 1898-99).

Accounts of the receipt and expenditure of the capital and of the income derived from the lands and other property held for the benefit of Greenwich Hospital and the foundation of Samuel Travers, Esquire, for the year ended 31st March, 1899; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 22nd February, 1900, declaring that Mr. Roger Fanning Sleight, sub-postmaster, Morley, Leeds, under the General Post Office Department, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (SECTION 21).

Ordinance No. 1 of the University Court of the University of Edinburgh providing for the separation of the teaching of medical jurisprudence of forensic medicine and public health in the University of Edinburgh; laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 20.)

SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM.

Statement of the funds, 5th January, 1900 ; Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITION.

CENSUS.

Petition that a statement may be made in the next census of the religious denominations to which those enumerated belong ; of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland ; read, and ordered to lie upon the Table.

LUNACY BILL [H.L.].

Read 3^a (according to order) ; Amendments made ; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC AND ORANGE FREE STATE — STATE AND PRIVATE RAILWAYS.

*THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN : My Lords, I beg to move for a Return with reference to each of the railways in the Orange Free State and in the South African Republic respectively, showing whether such railways belong to the State or to private companies ; and also giving the cost or capital value of the same. The object and purpose of this motion will, I think, be sufficiently transparent and clear to your Lordships. In a certain set of circumstances which, I hope, may not be very far distant, it will be necessary to consider very carefully and closely the value of the railways in the two republics, and it seems to me essential that we should possess, so far as it is possible, the requisite knowledge in order to enable an intelligent opinion to be formed. It is not possible for an individual to secure this information with accuracy, but so far as I have been able to do so, I have looked into certain figures and facts which I have been able to obtain with regard to these railways, and if your Lordships will pardon me for a minute or two I will make a short statement with regard to them. I will take first the Orange Free State. The railway communication of the Orange Free State consists chiefly of the railway which runs throughout that State, and

which originally was made by the Cape Colony. It was also originally worked by the Cape Colony, but there was a clause in the agreement by which the Orange Free State was enabled, if at any time it should see fit, to purchase the same. Some few years ago, for reasons which I dare say we can now imagine, the Orange Free State saw fit to exercise this right of purchase, and they acquired the railway from the Cape Colony for £2,450,000, of which loan they have repaid £650,000. At the present time they owe to the Cape Colony £1,800,000. I wish to point out in passing that on this showing alone there is a clear sum of £650,000 by which the capital cost of this railway has been diminished, and which could be otherwise used in any future arrangement. I think that is all I need say with regard to the Orange Free State, although it is true that there is another short line which starts from the border of Natal, coming from Ladysmith, and which goes down to Harrismith and to Bethlehem. That railway was made by the colony of Natal, and at the present time, I believe, is worked, or was worked until October last, by them. When we come to the Transvaal Republic the question is a very much larger one. The railway system of that Republic, speaking broadly, belongs to one large and powerful company which has its headquarters in Holland, and which has in many very important respects mixed itself up in the business and the affairs of the State. Originally the concession in respect to the Netherlands Railway was given in the year 1884 to certain Hollander and German capitalists. In 1887 that concession was floated by them, and the company appeared in the following form. There were 2,000 shares of 100 guilders each. The nominal capital of the company at that time was £166,000 in round figures, and I would ask your Lordships' attention to the shares and the way in which they were divided. To the German shareholders 819 shares were allotted, carrying with them thirty votes ; to the Republic itself 600 shares were allotted, carrying with them six votes ; but to the Hollander portion of the shareholders 581 shares were allotted, carrying seventy-six votes. Therefore the Hollander shareholders, with less than one-third of the shares and less than one-third of the capital, had double as much voting power as the Transvaal Republic and the

German capitalists put together. Your Lordships will not be surprised when I say that this arrangement was made at the time when Dr. Leyds was the attorney of the Transvaal Government. The system of railway extends now to 717 miles, and the capital, as it now stands, is £1,667,000, besides which obligations have been issued amounting to £7,000,000, so that the whole capital is £8,667,000. At the present moment—and this is a very important point—there are 14,000 shares issued, of which 5,758 shares belong to the Transvaal Republic and 8,242 to other persons. With regard to the pecuniary transactions and the financial position of the company itself, it appears from the accounts of 1898, which are very difficult indeed to understand, and are, I think, not intended to be understood, that there are no less than three different forms of giving dividends, but, as far as I can make out, the shareholders—of whom, of course, the Republic represents nearly three-sevenths—received about 14 per cent. upon their money, besides which there was a surplus which amounted to £608,000, of which 85 per cent., by the concession, went to the State, and 15 per cent. to the shareholders. Under that clause, in the year 1898, the sum of no less than £575,000 was paid to the South African Republic. It will be seen, therefore, what a valuable asset this ought to be. Not merely have you the value of the shares, but if things continue in the same way as up to the end of the year 1898 the State, or those who represent the State, will have at their control the sum of nearly £600,000. Your Lordships can calculate for yourselves on how much capital that sum alone would pay interest. The head office of this company is in Holland, but fortunately the line itself is in the Transvaal, and hereafter it is quite possible, and I hope it is quite certain, that very careful investigation will be made into the transactions of this company and into the manner in which they conduct their business. There is one other line in the South African Republic about which I should like to say a word. It is the Pretoria to Pietersburg line. I find that that line was registered in 1896 under British law. Fifty thousand £10 shares were issued, of which 30,000 belong to the Government and 20,000 to other persons. But, besides that, there

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have been two issues of debentures, one of £250,000 4 per cent. debentures issued by Messrs. Morton, Rose and Co., and another of £700,000 which has been guaranteed by the Government. The history of this line is rather pathetic. It was finished in 1899, and in October of the same year, on the outbreak of the war, was seized by the Republican Government. At the present time the contractors and others have, I understand, raised law suits. There are further lines in the Transvaal, on which it is hardly necessary to say anything. In respect to one, a Mr. Barend Vorster, a member of the First Raad, by presents and by corruption of every sort and kind openly administered to the members of the First Raad, and subsequently justified by President Kruger, obtained a concession. I do not know what the capital of the company is, but although the line itself is reported to be only 200 miles long, debentures for £500,000 were issued. That was also an arrangement which was made under the administration of Dr. Leyds in the year 1890. Your Lordships will not be surprised to hear that the contractor took the contract at £9,600 per mile, and two days later sublet it at £7,000 per mile, thus putting over £500,000 in his own pocket. There are some other smaller lines in the Republic. There is a line from Pretoria to Koomati Poort, and a line from Koomati Poort to Leydsdorp, with regard to the financial position of which I can obtain no information. I hope I have said enough to show that it is very desirable that we should have the information I ask for as early as possible. I submit to your Lordships that my inquiry for information is not a premature one. It has been said more than once lately that persons who have made similar motions have been endeavouring to divide the skin of the bear before he is dead. I do not propose to divide the skin of the bear, but I want to know whether he has a skin, and, if he has, what the value of that skin is. The mistake we have always made hitherto with regard to South Africa is that we have never done anything, or begun to do anything, until it was too late. The liabilities already entailed by this war amount, I think, to something like £60,000,000. This is to be paid, in the first instance, by the taxpayers of this country. It is quite clear that Parlia-

ment ought, and the taxpayers will expect them, to conduct the most minute investigation into the property of the two Republics, so as to ascertain what their powers are of paying for the war which they have forced upon us against our will and in so insolent a manner. I daresay there may be other inquiries of the same sort which will have to be instituted. There should be a proper inquiry into the present position of the National Bank of South Africa, another of the financial concerns which have been largely, if not chiefly, started and held in Holland. I hope your Lordships will agree with me that it is desirable that this information should be laid upon the Table. I move accordingly.

Moved, "That an humble address be presented to Her Majesty for a Return with reference to each of the railways in the Orange Free State and in the South African Republic respectively, showing whether such railways belong to the State or to private companies; and also giving the cost or capital value of the same."—(*The Earl of Camperdown*.)

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (*The Earl of SELBORNE*): My Lords, there is no objection to granting the Return which the noble Lord has moved for, though I cannot hold out any hope of being able to furnish it within any very brief interval of time, because much of the information that will be required to render the Return complete has yet to be sought for. If the noble Lord will communicate to me the exact form in which he would like the Return to be made out, the Department which I represent will do its best to meet his wishes. The noble Lord has given a slight sketch of the history of the main lines in the Orange Free State and the South African Republic, and although the figures at my disposal do not in every respect entirely tally with those quoted by the noble Lord, yet I think the general sketch he has given to the House is an accurate one. The chief authorities at present available on this question—and there is a great deal of information to be found in them—are, in the first place, the Report of the Industrial Commission of the South African Republic; secondly, the Report on the Finances of that Republic for the year 1898; and last, but by no means least, the Experts'

Report of the Delagoa Bay Tribunal, which contains a mass of information on South African Railways. The noble Lord will not expect me now to express any opinion on the part of Her Majesty's Government on those points of future policy on which he has touched. But I can assure him that the Government are fully alive to the importance in South African politics of the system of South African railways. It is a commonplace—the influence of railways in this century on the development—social, industrial, and political—of various countries. But I do not know any region in the world in which the railway system is likely to play a more important part in these respects than South Africa.

On Question, agreed to.

U. K. AMBASSADOR AT WASHINGTON
—RETENTION OF LORD PAUNCE-
FOTE BEYOND HIS PERIOD OF
OFFICE.

LORD NEWTON: My Lords, I rise to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the valuable services rendered by Lord Pauncefote as Ambassador at Washington, the advisability of further prolonging his tenure of office will be considered. In putting this question, perhaps it would be as well if I explained that there is an excellent rule in Her Majesty's Diplomatic Service, instituted, if I am not mistaken, by the noble Marquess the Prime Minister himself, that all persons holding office should retire on attaining the age of seventy. That rule has been rigidly observed, and the only exception I can recall is the case of the late Lord Lyons. Lord Pauncefote has attained the age of seventy, and his tenure of office has already, I believe, been extended for one year. It is the general feeling that under the exceptional circumstances which prevail a further relaxation of the official regulations might in this case be made with advantage. It is quite unnecessary, and it would, indeed, be presumptuous on my part to do so, to dwell on the excessive, I may almost say overwhelming, importance of our relations with the Government of the United States at the present moment, but there is no harm in saying that the task of maintaining those relations upon their present happy footing is not likely to prove less difficult in the immediate future. In addition to questions of great delicacy and great intricacy

which are now pending, we have looming in the near future a Presidential election, and as your Lordships are aware, a Presidential election in America is productive of political eccentricities which are unknown in older and less enterprising countries. I need scarcely remind your Lordships of the unfortunate occurrences which took place during the tenure of office of former Ambassadors. Under these circumstances it will probably have occurred to almost everybody that the present moment is hardly an opportune one for a change, more especially as this country happens to be represented by a highly distinguished public servant who not only enjoys the confidence of his own countrymen, but is in the happy position of being at once apparently a *persona grata* to the Government of the United States and also to the American people. I observe that the answer to the question which I have put on the Paper has already been supplied in anticipation by one of the newspapers. I have no means of ascertaining whether this semi-official announcement is well founded or not; but I am convinced of this, that if the noble Marquess is in a position to officially corroborate what has been unofficially stated it will give universal and unmixed satisfaction.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY): My Lords, my noble friend has rather done what the French call breaking in an open door, because this measure, which he properly recommends, was taken some days ago. I entirely agree, and every one must agree, in any eulogy passed on Lord Pauncefote, and I have shown that I concur with the noble Lord by the course I have taken in extending his tenure of office. The only observation I would make is that the noble Lord's question rather implied that this extension is a reward for valuable services. I think that the case stands the other way. It is to Lord Pauncefote we have to express our thanks that he has been kind enough to undertake the work for another period. He does so at considerable inconvenience, as he has sent his family to England, and without wishing to say anything indiscreet about the American climate, I believe the summer is not the most desirable period of the year. Therefore we have

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every cause to express our gratitude to Lord Pauncefote that at a critical time when his remarkable experience and the singular aptitude he has shown in the fulfilment of the peculiar duties of his office render it desirable he should continue in it, he has consented to do so.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I think we may in one sense be grateful to the noble Lord opposite for mentioning this matter, although we were aware that the period of service of Lord Pauncefote was to be prolonged. It has given us an opportunity of expressing our great satisfaction with what has been done, and that Lord Pauncefote, at his age and at a time of the year when the American climate is not very agreeable, is willing to place his valuable services at the disposal of the Government for a longer period.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—CLOTHING FOR THE TROOPS.

THE EARL OF LEVEN AND MELVILLE: My Lords, I rise to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state what warm clothing is being sent out for the troops serving in South Africa during the approaching winter in that country. I venture to ask this question because I think there is at the present moment a feeling of uncertainty and even of anxiety abroad as to the question of the clothing for our troops at the seat of war. I notice in *The Times* of February 20th, in a private letter, a quotation from a telegram sent home by Major-General Barton, in which he asked for warm strong underclothing for his men, who were beginning to suffer greatly from the chill of the nights. It appears to me a serious matter when a general officer has to telegraph home in terms of that description for clothing which is really absolutely necessary if the men are to continue efficient and healthy at their work. Some time ago I had a letter from a colonel of one of our Line regiments who had had some money sent out to him with the request that he would provide his men with tobacco and other comforts. He replied that the Government had given the men thin linen drawers, which in a climate like that of South Africa, where men perspire, become damp and cold next the skin, and that he had spent £100 in procuring warm clothing. It must be remembered

that this letter and this telegram were sent at a date when they had practically summer weather, and that they are looking forward to a time when the weather will be much colder. Although at night the thermometer may not reach any low degree, the variation between the heat in the middle of the day and the temperature at night is very great. I know that to provide warm clothing will entail expense, but I am sure the noble Marquess will be one of the last to let the question of expense interfere with the reasonable supply of proper clothing for the regiments in South Africa. But behind the noble Marquess there always stands the Treasury. Even as a matter of economy warm clothing should be sent out. Every man is worth to the country at the lowest estimate £150, and if his health gives way not only are his services lost, but he becomes a burden, for he goes into hospital. Therefore, if you lose one man through the want of proper clothing you lose as much as would supply a regiment with the necessary articles that are required. A question on this subject was asked the other day in another place, and Mr. Powell-Williams is reported to have said in reply* that two flannel or worsted belts were issued to every man going to South Africa, and a reserve supply was being sent out. The Financial Secretary to the War Office also said that considerable reserves of warm clothing had already been sent out, and more would be sent as supplies came in. I do not think anyone would urge that flannel belts are sufficient, and I hope the noble Marquess will be able to remove the impression which certainly exists in many quarters, that if the men are to have the absorbent clothing necessary in that climate it will have to be provided by other means than at the expense of the Government.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My noble friend may rest assured that we are quite alive to the necessity of supplying the troops in South Africa with warm clothing of a kind suitable to enable them to stand the climate, which we all know is likely before long to become somewhat severely cold. I think the best way in which I can answer his question is

by giving him an idea of what we are doing, or are about to do, in regard to the principal articles of the soldier's wardrobe. In the first place, there is his fighting suit. That, as the House knows, is made of what we commonly call khaki—a word which, of course, describes the colour and not the material. The khaki clothing which, until the present campaign, has been issued to the Army has been cotton khaki, commonly called khaki drill. Of that khaki drill two suits have usually been issued to each soldier, besides the ordinary clothing for campaigning purposes. We are substituting for one of these suits a suit of khaki woollen serge, which is obviously much more suitable to the climate. Of these khaki serge suits, 140,000 have been sent out, either with the men as they embarked, or so as to follow them. That number ought to provide one suit for every man who has already started for South Africa. In addition to that, we hope to send out weekly consignments of from 10,000 to 15,000 suits of khaki serge. I am a little uncertain as to the exact number, because in this matter we are, to a certain extent, in the hands of the contractors; there are very few of them who are able to produce material of the quality which we require. Then, as regards shirts, each man takes out with him two flannel shirts. Besides these we have sent out 96,000, and we hope to go on sending them out at the rate of about 25,000 per week. Each man has a woollen jersey as part of his kit. We have already sent out 42,000 more to meet additional requirements, and we hope to send out jerseys at the rate of 20,000 a week. Then, each man has two flannel belts to start with. We have sent out 40,000 more, and expect to be able to send out others at the rate of 50,000 a week during the next few weeks. We are also sending out weekly a consignment of 50,000 pairs of woollen socks, and 330,000 pairs have already gone out. We have sent out 26,000 great coats, and hope to send out from 3,000 to 8,000 a week to replace those which originally went out with the men, and, no doubt, are beginning to show signs of wear. Then we shall send 10,000 woollen caps weekly to replace the woollen caps which went out with the men. I may also mention that in this campaign we have for the first time made an issue to the unmounted troops of woollen drawers.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxviii., p. 1226.

Hitherto, I believe, it has been customary to give cotton drawers only, and these only to the mounted men. Therefore we have made a new departure which, I am sure, will commend itself to my noble friend. Before the cold weather sets in in South Africa we shall issue two pairs of woollen drawers to the whole of the dismounted troops; 200,000 pairs have already gone, and it is hoped to send out 20,000 pairs a week. The only other matter which I need notice is that of blankets. Each man took out two blankets with him. We have sent out 166,000 more, and we are continuing to send them out at the rate of 30,000 a month. Of course I need not tell your Lordships that these articles of clothing are issued quite irrespectively of those which the great generosity of the public has in many cases supplied to the troops. I have only to say before I sit down that I heard with regret that part of my noble friend's speech in which he endeavoured to persuade us that as a mere matter of economy it was desirable that we should supply a soldier liberally with clothing of this kind. He said—"Your soldier is worth £150 to you; therefore do not let him impair his health." I can assure him that that is not the point of view upon which we have gone, and I must also be permitted to add that in matters of this kind I have on no single occasion found the Treasury at all averse to supplying me with the funds which were required.

THE EARL OF LEVEN AND MELVILLE: My Lords, I hope I may be allowed to thank the noble Marquess for his answer, and to express my satisfaction that these articles are being sent out. I had no intention of suggesting that the noble Marquess would look upon the supply of clothing to the troops from the point of view of economy, but what I said was that behind the noble Marquess there might be someone with whom the question of expense would weigh.

BOER PRISONERS—PLACE OF CUSTODY.

*LORD LOCH: I rise to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can give any assurance that the Boer prisoners, now amounting to several thousands, will not be interned in places in proximity to the Dutch districts of the Cape Colony, or in any considerable numbers in the Cape

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peninsula. The question of which I have given notice is due to a considerable anxiety which I believe has been felt in this country as well as in South Africa with regard to the places where it is proposed to place the large number of Boer military prisoners who are now in Cape Town. The unrest which unfortunately exists in the Dutch districts in the southern portion of South Africa renders it a matter of very grave importance that these prisoners should not be interned in any near proximity to those provinces, or in those districts themselves. I am quite aware that there is great difficulty in finding proper and suitable places where they can be placed. There are, however, certain places on the east coast, as well as beyond the great naval station at Simons Bay, where there is a promontory on which some 3,000 to 4,000 men could be interned with the greatest ease and kept safely, without any chance of escape, by a very small force. I understand, however, that it has been suggested that some of the prisoners should be sent to St. Helena. I dare say there may be an advantage in sending some of them to that island, but I question very much whether the large number of prisoners, who now amount to between 6,000 and 7,000, could be located with any great advantage in that country. We must bear in mind that the majority of the Boers have never seen the sea, and they would regard being sent to St. Helena as a greater punishment inflicted on their prisoners than is meted out by the Transvaal Government to our prisoners at present in Pretoria. If, however, Her Majesty's Government have consulted Sir Alfred Milner on the question, and if he approves of the place where the prisoners are to be located, then I am quite satisfied that whatever decision may have been arrived at is the best both from political and military considerations. I have referred to the unrest which is at present unhappily on the increase in the Dutch districts in the southern part of the colony as well as in the northern portion, near Barkly West. I do not know whether your Lordships have observed that as success has followed our arms the agitation in these districts has increased. At least such is the information I have received by telegram and by letter. What is the cause of that increase of unrest? No doubt it arose from the fact that in the early part

of the war the tenacity of the Boers encouraged the Dutch population in the colony to believe that Her Majesty's Government would at last be forced to come to some understanding with the two Republics, based on a guarantee of their independence; but since the successes which have followed Lord Roberts's advance into the Free State, they must feel that all possibility of preventing the ultimate occupation, and I believe the occupation within a comparatively short period of Pretoria is at an end, and they must have observed that the general feeling in this country is such that we shall never allow a state of affairs to arise after the termination of the war such as existed prior to it. Their only course, therefore, is to agitate to the utmost to endeavour to make the Government believe that annexation would create trouble and rising in all parts of Cape Colony. Their agitation has also, I fancy, the object of encouraging that small minority in this country who believe that no interference should take place with the independence of the two Republics. But, my Lords, I am satisfied of one thing, and I am satisfied because I think I have a very fair knowledge of the Dutch character, that when Her Majesty's Government are able to declare positively what the future of the two Republics is to be—and I do not think any noble Lord can doubt what that decision will ultimately be—and if at the same time a statement is made based upon the same principles as those which were embodied in Lord Roberts's Proclamation to the Free Staters, all opposition will cease, as well as the agitation got up amongst the Dutch of the Cape Colony with the view of alarming, if possible, the Government as to what would result from that annexation. When they know for certain what the intentions of the Government are I believe that agitation will cease, and that in a very short time after the conquest of the two Republics is completed the burghers in both Republics will be found accepting the rule of Great Britain, and will prove to be as loyal as any citizens of Her Majesty's colonies, and as loyal as the French Canadians have proved themselves to be. I rejoiced to see the other day that the latter formed a company of the Canadian force which assisted Lord Roberts in his recent expedition. I trust it will not be long before Her Majesty's

Government will be able to make a clear statement as to what the future of the two Republics is to be. I now beg to ask the question standing on the Paper in my name.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I am sure my noble friend will acquit me of disrespect if I do not follow him through the very interesting statement he has just made to the House. My business is to answer his question. His question is whether I am able to give him an assurance that the Boer prisoners will not be interned in places in proximity to the Dutch districts of the Cape Colony, or in any considerable numbers in the Cape Peninsula. I am able to give him the assurance for which he asks.

RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS AND THE MILITIA.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE: My Lords, I wish to call the attention of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War to the regulations by which retired officers in receipt of retired pay or gratuity which they have earned by previous service in the Army are deprived of the same on the embodiment of the Militia regiment in which they are serving, as well as the gratuity which is granted to the other Militia officers on the disembodiment of the Militia; and to ask whether it would not be advisable to remove these restrictions under the present circumstances. To make it clear, perhaps it would be advisable for me to read the paragraph which appears in the Royal Warrant. It is as follows—

"If a re-employed officer in receipt of regimental or staff pay, or pay as an officer of embodied Militia, has commuted his retired pay, a deduction equivalent to the amount of the retired pay at the time of commutation shall be made from his effective pay. If he has retired with a gratuity, the deduction from his effective pay shall be equivalent to the annual value of such gratuity, as determined actuarially according to the prospects of his life at the time of his receipt of the gratuity."

I think it is universally admitted that it is of the utmost importance, as well as being most advantageous to the Militia, that there should be a certain sprinkling of Army officers in its commissioned ranks; but as long as such regulations as these exist it cannot be expected that many will be induced to come. When, a few weeks

ago,* the noble Marquess gave in this House his very able exposition of the general military policy of the Government, all Militia officers were very pleased to hear his eulogistic remarks about that old constitutional force. The noble Marquess said the position of the Militiaman was to be improved by granting him free groceries the same as had been granted to his comrade of the Line. Having, therefore, improved the position of the private in the Militia, I trust he will now do something for the retired Army officers serving with the Militia, and, even if he does not see his way to grant them the gratuity on disembodiment, that he will find the means of modifying the paragraph which I have read from the regulations.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The regulation to which the noble Lord refers lays down that "retired pay shall not be issued to an officer for any period during which he is in receipt of regimental or staff pay, or pay as an officer of embodied Militia." The State has a lien upon an officer in receipt of retired pay, and if such an officer is required or allowed to emerge from his retirement and to accept military employment it would not be fair to the public that he should receive both his retired pay and the pay to which such employment might entitle him. The only exception to that rule which I can discover is that made in favour of Militia or Yeomanry officers, who are allowed to receive retired pay as well as Militia or Yeomanry pay while they are employed on the preliminary drill and training of their regiments. I am not aware of the circumstances owing to which this exception was made. The training usually lasts about a month, and we have therefore decided that, in the case of officers serving with embodied Militia, they too shall be allowed to receive both full pay and retired pay for a period of one month. It is not the case that the gratuity has been withdrawn. It has been ruled that it shall be given to retired officers in all cases where they do not derive any advantage in the way of pension or gratuity owing to their re-employment. If they do derive such an advantage they

may elect whether they will retain that advantage or forfeit it and draw the gratuity.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five of the clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 8th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely:—

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, namely:—

London and South Western Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

DUBLIN ELECTRIC LIGHTING BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I understand that this Bill has been postponed until the 22nd instant by arrangement.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): May I ask if it could not possibly be taken before that date? There are several Bills of a like character which are to be

* February 12th, 1900. See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxviii., p. 1175.

referred to a Select Committee, and I think that it would be a great pity if the proceedings of that Committee were delayed by reason of this Bill not being ready.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I can assure the hon. Member that he need be under no apprehension in regard to this matter. There are considerations entirely separate affecting this Bill, and I do not think anybody will be disposed under the circumstances to delay the proceedings of the Select Committee by unduly postponing this Bill. The object of the postponement is to endeavour, if possible, to come to some general agreement, and I do trust that the House may not be troubled by any debate upon the Bill.

Bill ordered to be read a second time upon Thursday, 22nd March.

CHRISTCHURCH, BOURNEMOUTH, AND WINTON TRAMWAYS BILL.

"To empower the Poole and District Electric Traction Company, Limited, to construct Tramways from Christchurch and Winton to Bournemouth, and in Bournemouth; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY BILL (BY ORDER).

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): In moving the Instruction which stands in my name, I may say that I did somewhat hope that it would be hardly necessary for me to trouble the House with the matter, as similar Instructions have already been before us, and have been agreed to, but a paper has been circulated this morning which seems to suggest that there is some objection to my proposal. According to that paper, the first objection is that the only reason for the Instruction is because a Select Committee has made recommendations in regard to this company. I do not think there could be any stronger reason for carrying this Instruction. This Select Committee has given nearly twenty days consideration to the question of London gas after an interval of twenty-five years, and if this House does not instruct the Committee to which the Gas Light and Coke Company's Bill is to be referred, to have regard to the decisions of that Committee, they may hear nothing

more of its recommendations. Perhaps the chief argument used, however, is that the company was not heard against the recommendations before the Committee. Now, evidence was given before that Committee on behalf of the company by its secretary and chairman. They occupied seven whole days, they defended the views of the company in every way, and I do not think that in any sense it can be suggested that the company was not fully heard. But it is suggested that if we carry this Instruction, one part of which is that the standard price of gas shall be reduced, the reduction of the standard price will not really reduce the price of gas to the consumer. That is a little misstatement, because it will immediately reduce the price of gas, and I think the argument used in the paper which has been circulated is not a *bona fide* argument. The argument is this, that the reduction of the standard price can only affect new capital, and that, as the new capital is raised under the auction clause, whatever the terms may be it cannot affect the price of gas. That is hardly a candid argument, because if the Instruction is carried it will prevent such a large dividend being paid by the company, and there will be directly a reduction in the price of gas. Then, I may be asked, "Is it a fair thing?" "Is there a precedent for a reduction in the standard price of gas?" Yes, we had a precedent in the case of the Lea Bridge Company. The matter was fully considered before a Committee of this House; and, therefore, I do not think any value can be attached to the argument against this part of the Instruction. The second part of the Instruction deals with the company's area, and again I am asked if there is a precedent for transferring the area of one company to another. But this is a very peculiar case indeed. This matter was fully considered by the Select Committee, and when we remember the cheap price at which the gas is sold south of the river, and that that cheap price puts an extra tax upon all the consumers north of the river, I think it will be admitted that there is a good case made out for this particular recommendation of the Committee. There is one other point to which I must allude. There is a reference in the Instruction to the price charged by this company for the use of its "slot" meters. That is, perhaps, the most important recommendation,

because in two portions of the area supplied by the company the charge for the use of these slot meters differs to the extent of 50 per cent. This company charges 9d. per thousand cubic feet north of the Thames for the use of these meters, and 1s. 2d. on the south side, and I do not think it can be suggested that there can possibly be the slightest reason why this great difference should exist. The Committee fully considered this point, and recommended that the charge should be the same in both parts of company's area. I understand that it is proposed to refer this Bill to the same Committee as the South Metropolitan Gas Company's Bill, and unless we carry this Instruction the Committee will not be cognisant of the decisions arrived at by the Select Committee after full consideration. I therefore beg to move the Instruction which stands in my name, and I hope the House will unanimously agree to it.

*MR. MARKS (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to second the Instruction, and in doing so I should like to remind the House of the circumstances under which the recommendations embodied in the Instruction now before the House were made. A Select Committee was appointed last year to inquire into the affairs of the metropolitan gas companies. It investigated the affairs of all the gas companies in London, but it was an open secret that the complaints were mostly levelled against one particular company. The chief culprit against whom complaint was made in respect to the supply of gas was unquestionably the Gas Light and Coke Company. There were three charges practically made against that company. The first was that it charged excessive prices for its gas; the second, that the company was badly managed; and the third, that it had systematically disregarded the public interest. Upon each one of these three points the Committee took evidence at great length, and each point was proved up to the hilt. The Committee examined witnesses from the Board of Trade, the Corporation of the City of London, the County Council, and several vestries of the metropolis, as well as representatives of the three gas companies supplying the metropolis with gas. It can, therefore, hardly be contended

that the inquiry was in any way one-sided, or that the parties interested on both sides were not given ample opportunity of being heard. Having heard the evidence, the Committee reached the conclusion that there had been bad management of the company, that it had not complied with the obvious intentions of Parliament when it granted the company its privileges, and it made certain recommendations with a view to remedying the admitted grievances. These recommendations are embodied in the Instruction which has now been moved. It may be urged that this Instruction is of too mandatory a character. I would submit that, if there ever was a case for a mandatory Instruction to a Committee, it is the present case, because the Gas Light and Coke Company have for years past been complained against, and endeavours have been made to voice those complaints in this House and in other places. It has been for years urged—unfortunately, in vain—that this company has failed to fulfil its obligations to the public, and it was not until six years of agitation had elapsed that the appointment of this Select Committee was secured. The recommendations made by the Committee go to the very root of the matter, and it was intended that they should be applied when the company should come to Parliament again for an alteration or extension of capital powers. Now, the Gas Light and Coke Company has come to Parliament for a further extension of its capital powers. It has come with a full knowledge of the investigations made before the Select Committee, and a full knowledge of the recommendations of that Committee, and it has, in a spirit of cynical indifference, flouted the recommendations of that Committee, and practically set at nought the authority of this House. If, as this Select Committee did report, there exists a genuine cause of complaint against the Gas Light and Coke Company, there is only one way in which these grievances can be dealt with, and that is by taking advantage of an occasion like this when the company comes to this House asking for further powers. This is the opportunity for securing that the recommendations of the Select Committee shall be carried into effect. Here is no question for any particular set of men, or for any particular section of this House. Here

Mr. Lough.

is an exceptional opportunity to show that honourable Members in every quarter of this House are resolutely determined to resist oppression and unjust treatment of the public on the part of any great corporation which, by favour of Parliament, is permitted to carry on at a large profit the supply of a common necessity of life. The charges made by the Gas Light and Coke Company are admittedly high. By comparison with the charges of other companies they are extortionate; they exceed the charges of the South Metropolitan Gas Company by something like 33 per cent., and it cannot be contended that the difference in price is due to any legitimate difference in the circumstances of the two companies. According to the Report of the Select Committee, these excessive charges are due to mismanagement on the part of the company itself, and to a long continued and systematic disregard of the public interest. I do urge that on an occasion like this, when it is in the power of this House to remedy a real public grievance, the opportunity should not be allowed to pass unimproved. If this opportunity does pass now, the metropolitan gas consumers may find themselves for another twenty-five years, or even for an indefinite period, bound hand and foot by the privileges which this House affords to the Gas Light and Coke Company; privileges which were afforded on the understanding that they should be used for the benefit of the public, and for the legitimate profit of the company. There is no reason why consumers on the north side of the river should be mulcted to the extent of 33 per cent. more than those on the Surrey side, and I earnestly hope that my hon. friend will, if necessary, press this Instruction to a division.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert clauses in the Bill to carry into effect the recommendations of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Gas Companies (1899), as follows:—

"(1) That the standard price should be reduced to 3s. 3d. to carry the standard dividend of 10 per cent., and that the existing scale of increase and decrease for dividend of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every penny of decrease or increase of price below or above 3s. 3d. be maintained, and that a

secondary or additional scale be imposed which should permit of an increase or decrease of dividend over and above that regulated by the present scale of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. for every complete 3d. of decrease or increase below or above the standard price of 3s. 3d.

"(2) That the area south of the River Thames, at present part of the district of the Gas Light and Coke Company, should be transferred from the Gas Light and Coke Company to the South Metropolitan Gas Company, fair and reasonable price being paid.

"(3) That the charge made by the Gas Light and Coke Company for the rents of automatic meters and stoves should be the same to consumers north and south of the Thames for fittings of the same quality and capacity."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

SIR JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): Notwithstanding the speeches of the mover and seconder, I rise to propose an Amendment of a similar character to that which I moved on a like Instruction the other day.* I do so because I do not think it is giving the Gas Light and Coke Company fair play to pass this mandatory Instruction before they have been heard on the various points involved. I may point out that, although I agree in the main with this Instruction, and I hope that the principles embodied in it will be adopted, I do think that the reduction in the standard price of gas is a very drastic reform to be undertaken. It certainly should be seriously considered before any such alteration is made. I do not wish to delay the House on this matter, but I think it is altogether against the spirit of the view taken by this House of Commons in regard to the operation of Private Bill Committees to pass such a mandatory Instruction unless there are circumstances of an exceptional character to justify it. Although I hope that many of the recommendations contained in the Instruction will be adopted in the Bill, I certainly hold to the opinion that the companies should be heard, and heard fully before any determination is come to on the point. It should be remembered that circumstances have altered very much since the standard

* See discussion on the South Metropolitan Gas Bill, 6th March, 1900 (page 189 of this Volume).

price was fixed, and if the standard price is altered, it is quite possible that the standard dividends will also have to be altered. I am rather surprised that the hon. Member for West Islington should have brought forward the matter again to-day. I understood that he had accepted the view of the House on the South Metropolitan Gas Company's Bill, which was discussed the other day, when words were inserted similar to those which I am moving now. I think, if he will agree to the insertion of the words I have to propose, the matter may be allowed to go before a Committee in whose wisdom and fairness we can trust.

MR. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.) said he wished to second the Amendment of his hon. friend. He hoped the House would accept it, emanating as it did from the Chairman of the Select Committee which considered the subject last year.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, after the second word 'to,' to insert the words 'inquire whether it be desirable to.'"—(*Sir James Rankin.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said the speech of the hon. Baronet was mainly directed against the recommendations of the Select Committee, but it was too late to take up that ground now, because he himself was not only Chairman of the Committee, but had also concurred in its recommendations. The hon. Baronet said that the recommendations were too stringent and that the company had a right to be heard. But the company had been already heard, and the effect of the Amendment would be to re-open the whole question. That was a prospect which would appal the ratepayers of London, because, directly or indirectly, the expense of another prolonged inquiry would fall on them. In the memorandum which had been issued in connection with the Bill there was a reference to him which was inaccurate, and which he wished to contradict. It was stated that the Committee was appointed in 1898, but that it did not commence work that year because of the action of Mr. Pickersgill in moving to widen the scope of the inquiry. That statement was absolutely inaccurate.

Sir James Rankin.

MR. LOUGH said he did not think the responsibility for the statement rested with him, but as far as he might have been responsible he entirely withdrew it.

MR. PICKERSGILL said that the Committee was only appointed a few weeks before Parliament was prorogued in 1898, and it was absolutely impossible that it could have proceeded with the inquiry that year. It was true that in the following year he did propose an Amendment making the Instruction more specific. In that Amendment he anticipated the objection which the company now advanced, namely, that they had no specific notice that the Committee would consider whether or not the statutory conditions as to the price of gas and the dividend should be revised. The Government declined to accept that Amendment, and he then stated that he would not press it, and that he threw on the Government the responsibility of declining to take a step which would make the inquiry really beneficial.* If that Amendment had been carried the company would have had specific notice, and there would have been no ground whatever for the objection now raised. The House, not having accepted that Amendment, would now, he was afraid, be bound to assent to the Amendment of the hon. Baronet.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The remarks of the hon. Member who has just sat down were, I think, more interesting to himself than to the House. The main question that is to be decided now is really the same question that was decided the other day in connection with another Bill, and I should have thought that the hon. Member for West Islington would have immediately accepted the Amendment of my hon. friend and have obviated any further discussion. The hon. Member for South-west Bethnal Green appeals to the recommendations of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Gas Companies, but the chairman of that Committee is the hon. Member who has moved the Amendment now before the House, and I have no doubt that in doing so he voices the views of that Committee. The recommendations of the Committee were never in-

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxviii., p. 423.

tended to be dealt with by the House on the Second Reading of a Bill, but to be considered by the Committee to which the Bill was referred, and it would be unwise for the House to commit itself to the *ipsissima verba* of this Instruction without hearing evidence. I hope the Amendment to the Instruction will be accepted, and that the Instruction will go to the Committee, not as a mandatory Instruction, but as an indication from the House that the recommendations should be considered if that course is deemed advisable.

*MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District) said, as a member of the Select Committee, he hoped the House would accept the Amendment of the hon. Baronet. It would be a very dangerous proceeding to lay down that any recommendation made by a Select Committee on questions connected with Private Bill matters, which, though it had heard evidence, had not heard parties by counsel, should be necessarily binding on all parties concerned when they tried to obtain a private Bill.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he was quite sure he would not be accused of not being in sympathy with the recommendations of the Select Committee, because it was on his motion that the Committee was appointed. He was glad that the hon. Member for South-west Bethnal Green now saw that his action last year was not to the advantage of the consumers.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I said directly the reverse.

MR. COHEN said he was sorry that even yet the hon. Member did not realise that his action last year was not to the advantage of the consumers. He had very little sympathy with the Gas Light and Coke Company, whose want of management had been abundantly proved before the Select Committee, but it was to the interest of consumers that the company should be given fair play. If the company were allowed to say all it had to say before the Select Committee, he was quite sure that the wisdom and necessity of nearly all the recommendations of last year's Committee would be established, and safeguards would be inserted in the Bill in the

interests of the too long suffering consumers. There was another reason for not making the Instruction a mandatory Instruction. The London County Council—a body which could not be accused of any sympathy with the company, or want of sympathy with the consumers—had recommended another arrangement which would be brought before the Committee, and the Committee would be able to decide what was just in the interests of consumers in North London, and also what was just to the company.

MR. LOWLES (Shoreditch, Haggerston) thought the recommendation of the Committee that the principle of a sliding scale should be adopted was a clear and definite notice to gas companies of the views entertained by the House. Although he did not go so far as some hon. Members with regard to the alleged mismanagement of the Gas Light and Coke Company, there was the strange anomaly that on the south side of the Thames the charge was one-third less than on the north side, and that the South Metropolitan Gas Company was subject to the same price of 3s. 3d. now sought to be imposed on the Gas Light and Coke Company. He sincerely hoped the recommendation would be carried.

MR. LOUGH explained that the reason why he had not included the suggested Amendment was that there were certain technical difficulties in the way. He strongly supported the view that this particular company had treated London very badly, and was in a somewhat different position from that of the South Metropolitan Company. Therefore, though his judgment was entirely in favour of accepting the suggestion of the President of the Board of Trade, he left himself in the hands of the House with regard to the Amendment. As to the remarks of the hon. Member for South-west Bethnal Green, he assured the hon. Gentleman that nothing was further from his intention than to make any reflection on what he had done; the words were intended to be most complimentary.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked whether he would be in order in moving that the

Report of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Gas Companies, with the minutes of evidence, be referred to the Committee by whom this Bill would be considered.

*MR. SPEAKER: It would be necessary to give notice, but it is really a question for the Chairman of the Committee.

MR. LOUGH: Is it in order now to move that this Bill be referred to the same Committee as the South Metropolitan Gas Company's Bill?

*MR. SPEAKER: No.

POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATION BILLS.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding nine members, to whom shall be committed all private Bills promoted by municipal and other local authorities, by which it is proposed to create powers relating to police and sanitary regulations which deviate from, or are in extension of, or are repugnant to, the general law; that the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; that three be the quorum of the Committee."—(*The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department.*)

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) reminded the House that the object of the appointment of this Committee was to prevent different decisions emanating from Private Bill Committees upon matters within the category referred to. That object had not been very well served. The quorum was so small that a very limited number of members appeared to guide the decisions of the Committee, and those decisions were frequently not in the direction contemplated when the Committee was appointed. The Committee of Selection should exercise great care in appointing members of this Committee, in order that the House and the public interest might be protected against such results as often occurred. He hoped the Instruction meant what it said—

*MR. SPEAKER: It is not in order to refer to that part of the motion; I have not yet put the Instruction.

Mr. Pickersgill.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Very well; I will simply ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it would not be well to defer making this appointment until he has conferred with the Committee of Selection as to the best means of achieving the object he has in view.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley) replied that the question was really one for the Committee of Selection. It rested with that Committee to select men who would attend, and the Committee appeared to have done their work, onerous though it was, in a very satisfactory manner.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan), as a member of the Police and Sanitary Committee for six years, testified to the usefulness of the work done by the Committee. Uniformity of decisions was secured so far as the nature of the case permitted. Errors had no doubt been committed, but all Committees made mistakes from time to time. The general result had been highly beneficial to the public service, and as the Committee gained experience those beneficial results would doubtless increase.

MR. STRACHEY (Somerset, S.) asked whether it was the case that this Committee differed from other Private Bill Committees in that a declaration of having no interest was not required of members, nor had they to declare that they had been present and heard the evidence before they voted. If that was the case, it was a very serious question, and the House ought to consider whether the Committee should not be brought into line with other Private Bill Committees.

MR. HALSEY (Hertfordshire, Watford), as Chairman of the Committee of Selection, stated that that Committee endeavoured to exercise the greatest care in the choice of members for all Committees. With regard to this particular Committee, there was very great difficulty in getting members to serve, inasmuch as the work was so exceedingly arduous. The House, sooner or later, would have to consider whether some system could not be adopted by which the work of the Police and Sanitary Committee would be lightened.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum of the Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee not to insert in any Bill referred to them any provision which is already in force in the district to which the Bill applies under any public Act, or which might be put in force by adopting the provisions of any adoptive Act."—*(The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department.)*

MR. STRACHEY asked whether it was the case that the members of this Committee, which differed very little from a Private Bill Committee, were required to make a declaration of having no interests, and whether it was also necessary for them to make a declaration that they had been present and heard the evidence before giving their vote?

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: The answer is, No.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee in their Report, under Standing Orders 150 and 173A, to state their reasons for granting any powers in conflict with, deviation from, or excess of the general law."—*(The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department.)*

*SIR F. S. POWELL said that although there was no law prohibiting a Member having private interests sitting on such a Committee, there was a public feeling against such action. It so happened that he had been chairman of the Committee when dealing with a Sanitary Bill promoted by a borough in which he had private interests, and resigned the chair because he had large interests in a borough the Bill for which would necessarily occupy a great part of the session. The principle could be carried too far. For instance, in regard to Railway Bills, it would entirely weaken Committees on Railway Bills if no one could serve on such a Committee except those who had no interest in the railway.

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He granted that this was a most valuable Instruction. It had sometimes appeared in the Orders of the House and sometimes not; but he hoped it would always appear henceforth, and that when it did appear it would be effectually carried out, and that the reasons would be given at greater length than hitherto, and in an intelligible form. He also hoped that the Reports of the Committee would be available to Members at the earliest possible moment. He had only to express his hope that reasons would be given intelligibly, so that the House might exercise supervision over the Committee.

Question put; and agreed to.

Question proposed, "That in the case of Bills reported from the Committee, three clear days shall intervene between the date when the Report of the Committee is circulated with the Votes and the consideration of the Bill."

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That in the case of Bills reported from the Committee, three clear days shall intervene between the date when the Report of the Committee is circulated with the Votes and the consideration of the Bill.—*(Mr. Jesse Collings.)*

PETITIONS.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Leslie, against; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from West Leigh; Bettisfield; and Smithy Wood; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Great Yarmouth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Patricroft; Accrington; Briercliff-with-Extwistle; and Levenshulme; to lie upon the Table.

P

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Birmingham ; North Walsham ; Shildon ; Great Yarmouth ; Hull ; Leytonstone ; and Kelvedon ; to lie upon the Table.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Dunfermline, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (STATEMENT OF EXCESSES, 1898-9).

Copy presented, of Statement of the Sum required to be voted in order to make good Excesses of Army Expenditure beyond the grants, for the year ended 31st March, 1899 [by Command]. Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 90.]

CANADA-WEST INDIES.

Copy presented, of Agreement between the Canadian Government and Messrs. Pickford and Black to establish a steamship service between Canada and the West Indies [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Soane's Museum.—Copy of Statement of the Funds of the Museum of the late Sir John Soane on 5th January, 1900 [by Act].

INEBRIATES ACT, 1898.

Address for "Return showing—

(A.) The number and names, with addresses, of State reformatories instituted, or about to be instituted under Section 3 of this Act, with the number of males or females to be accommodated in each ;

(B.) The number and names, with addresses, of inebriate reformatories certified and in course of construction, respectively, with the number of males or females to be accommodated in each ;

(A. and B.) (1) The number of habitual drunkards (males and females, respectively) convicted as such under Sections 1 and 2, respectively, of the Inebriates Act, 1898, in the year 1899 ;

(2) The number of habitual drunkards who, after conviction, were in 1899 under detention in prison until a suitable reformatory willing to receive them was found, male and female, respectively ;

(C.) The number and names, with addresses, of retreats certified and in course of construction, respectively, with the number of males or females to be accommodated in each ;

(B. and C.) the names of the local authorities contributing, or willing to contribute, under Section 9 and Section 14, respectively, with particulars of such contribution, in support of certified reformatories and retreats, respectively."—(*Mr. Wharton.*)

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TREATMENT OF BOER PRISONERS — BRITISH PRISONERS AT PRETORIA.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the Boer prisoners confined on board ship at Cape Town and other places have suffered severely and for long periods from sea sickness ; and whether, under these circumstances, the Government will arrange to relieve those prisoners of this punishment by removing them to a place of safe keeping on shore.

MR. ARNOLD - FORSTER (Belfast, W.) : Before my hon. friend answers that question, may I ask whether there is any foundation for the statement that prisoners belonging to the Cape and Natal forces are subject to special indignities at Pretoria, and are confined in the common gaol ?

***MR. SPEAKER** : Order, order ! -That does not arise out of the question on the Paper. The hon. Member must give notice of his question.

***THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE** (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.) (for Mr. WYNDHAM) : There is no information at the War Office to this effect. The disposal of the prisoners is under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

ARTILLERY OF THE EIGHTH DIVISION.

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the artillery of the Eighth Division are now fully mobilised at Aldershot, and have received their uniform and equipment ; and whether they are to accompany the Division to South Africa ; and, if not, what is the cause of this decision.

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS** (for Mr. WYNDHAM) : The answer to the first paragraph is, Yes. The batteries will not, under present arrangements, proceed to South Africa, as the military authorities both at home and in South Africa agree that they are not required.

DUTCH DISLOYALTY AT SIMONSTOWN.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the military authorities on the northern frontier of the Cape Colony have referred home on the subject of the writ of *habeas corpus*, of which they have accepted service, returnable to the High Court at Cape Town on the 12th March ; and whether in any case instructions will be given to obey the writ by bringing up the three persons named therein for judgment to the High Court at Cape Town.

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS** (for Mr. WYNDHAM) : The military authorities having accepted service of the writ, the Secretary of State has no doubt that they will duly appear at the proper time.

MR. COURTNEY : Has any inquiry been made ?

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS** : I am not aware whether any inquiry has been made. Service having been accepted, things will take their natural course.

MR. COURTNEY : May I ask my hon. friend whether he is not aware that there has been a delay in answering this question, and, if it has not been for the purpose of making inquiry, why has it occurred ?

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS** : The only delay I know of is that I asked my right hon. friend for my own convenience to postpone this question from Tuesday until to-day.

BASUTO PONIES.

GENERAL RUSSELL : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the statement, published some time since and verified by the signature of the writer, to the effect that about last September a gentleman offered to secure for the Government the refusal of 15,000 Basuto ponies at a low price ; and, if so, was his offer declined.

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS** (for Mr. WYNDHAM) : The statement to which the hon. Member refers is, I presume, the letter which appeared in *The Times* of the 9th January, over the signature of Lieutenant-Colonel Allsopp. The writer stated that he had been offered 15,000 Basuto ponies at £15 apiece, and inquired what the War Office had done in the matter. The Secretary of State's attention was called to this letter, and he at once wrote to Lieutenant-Colonel Allsopp, asking to be referred to the person by whom the offer was made. Colonel Allsopp referred Lord Lansdowne to a gentleman of the name of Pardy as the person who made the offer. Mr. Pardy was thereupon asked whether he could supply 15,000 Basuto ponies, or a smaller number, and at what rate. He replied that he was prepared to proceed at once to Pondoland and Basutoland, and, "if sufficiently backed by the Government, to procure all the available horses." Funds were to be placed at his disposal, and he was to receive the honorary rank of major and pay at the rate of £60 a month. But he was unable to produce any evidence to show that horses of the right stamp were actually available. Mr. Pardy has since addressed a communication to the War Office explaining that Colonel Allsopp's letter conveyed an erroneous impression, as his only offer was to go to South Africa as the agent of Her Majesty's Government, trusting that his knowledge of the country would enable him to pick up a considerable number of ponies at reasonable rates. Mr. Pardy's offer was not accepted. I may explain that long before the appearance of Colonel Allsopp's letter inquiries had been made in South Africa as to the possibility of buying Basuto ponies. Reports, however, from the General Officer Commanding at the Cape and from the Resident Commissioner in Basutoland were to the effect that ponies of the proper class were unobtainable.

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*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr.
WYNDHAM): I am not yet able to give
precise information in answer to the first
question. The Militia Artillery will on
embodiment be paid like regular Artil-
lery.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR: Will
the hon. Gentleman answer the second
part of the question?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I have
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SUPPRESSED CABLES TO THE CAPE.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the
Under Secretary of State for War by
whose authority, and under what law or
regulation, a cablegram, sent on 14th
February to a newspaper at Cape Town,
recording the proceedings of a conference
held at the Westminster Palace Hotel on
that day, and including a resolution of
sympathy with the Cape and Natal
Ministries, has been stopped by the
censor at Cape Town.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr.
WYNDHAM): No information has reached
this office that such a cablegram was
stopped at Cape Town as mentioned.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask
further question on the subject.

THE COLONIES AND THE WAR.

MR. WILLIAM WYNDHAM: I beg
to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer
whether it is proposed to contribute
Canada, or any of the colonies, to
any portion of the cost of the
war, or whether all the cost of
military operations will be borne
by the taxpayers of Great Britain and
Ireland.

MR. COGHILL (St. James): I beg
to give to Australia, Canada, and the
colonies 103 representatives in the
House of Commons?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

MR. WYNDHAM: I beg to answer
the question.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask
what length of time will be required
for the Militia Artillery to be paid

what length of time
Militia Artillery to be paid

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): May I ask whether it is not the duty of the Intelligence Department of the War Office to make themselves acquainted with what horses are available in the different parts of the Empire?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: That is exactly what the Intelligence Department did.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Is Mr. Pardy a Birmingham man?

[No answer was given.]

PRESS CENSORSHIP.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the censor of news in South Africa is a military or civil officer, under what authority military or civil and under whose instructions he acts, what correspondence telegraphic and postal is submitted to his examination, and whether all such examination takes place in South Africa.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for MR. WYNDHAM): The censorship in South Africa is exercised by military officers acting under the authority of the Field Marshal commanding the forces. It is not desirable to give information as to the manner in which it is exercised.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War with what person lies the primary responsibility for the system of censorship and suppression now exercised in the South African colonies over telegrams from abroad, under what authority it is exercised, at what date commenced, and by whom the actual duty of inspecting such telegrams is performed; and whether there is or has been any similar system with respect to letters or other documents passing through the Post Office to the Cape Colony or Natal, and in that case under what authority it is exercised.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for MR. WYNDHAM): The responsibility for the censorship rests with Her Majesty's Government, several Departments of which are concerned. It is exercised under Articles VII. and VIII. of the International Telegraph Convention. It com-

menced in October and it is carried out by specially appointed military officers. It is not desirable to make known particulars with regard to the manner in which the censorship is exercised.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: Does the hon. Gentleman give us to understand that the responsibility for the censorship lies with the Field Marshal commanding the forces, or that it lies with Her Majesty's Government? Is it a military or a civil responsibility?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Perhaps the hon. Member will be good enough to understand precisely what I expressed by the answer which I have just given and by the answer which I gave to him.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: May I point out to the hon. Gentleman that the reason—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is not in order in giving his reasons for asking the question.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: The hon. Member rebuked me.

AN HON. MEMBER: Can the hon. Gentleman give us the name of the censor?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I have just stated that it is not desirable to make known the manner in which the censorship is exercised.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Is one of the censors Lord Stanley, a Government Whip?

[No answer was given.]

COLONIAL REGIMENTAL TITLES.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can furnish the designations of the various colonial regiments now serving in South Africa, and say under whose command each regiment is.

*MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for MR. WYNDHAM): The information is not at the disposal of the War Office, but an effort will be made to obtain it.

NEW AUSTRALIAN FORCE FOR SOUTH AFRICA—RATE OF PAY.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of

State for War what pay the men of the new Australian force now being raised at the request of Her Majesty's Government are to receive.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): These men will receive pay at ordinary British rates, with special local allowances according to the conditions under which they may be called upon to serve.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask the hon. Gentleman if there is any truth in the statement which has been made that some of these Australian troops are to receive 5s. a day.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The truth is in the answer given to the hon. Member.

TRANSPORT—IMPERIAL YEOMANRY —HORSE TRANSPORT ON THE "KENT."

SIR JOHN STIRLING-MAXWELL (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will state who was responsible for the appointment of the man Headly as veterinary surgeon on board the steamship "Kent," which is conveying the Bedfordshire contingent of Imperial Yeomanry to South Africa; and whether he is aware that Headly proved to have no diploma as a qualified veterinary surgeon, no drugs, and no instruments, and that four horses died on the voyage, between England and Madeira, of stoppage of water, because he was unable to perform the ordinary operation for their relief.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The responsibility for the appointment lies with the Yeomanry Committee. The selection of this person, who was certainly not qualified for the position, appears to have been due to an unfortunate confusion of identity. There was a full supply of veterinary drugs and instruments on board, placed there by the Army Veterinary Department.

MILITIA ARTILLERY—MOBILISATION AND PAY.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when does the Government intend to mobilise the Militia Artillery, and for what length of time; and are the Militia Artillery to be paid

on the same scale as when they are called out for their usual annual training.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): I am not yet able to give precise information in answer to the first question. The Militia Artillery will on embodiment be paid like regular Artillery.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR: Will the hon. Gentleman answer the second part of the question?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I have done so.

SUPPRESSED CABLES TO THE CAPE.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War by whose authority, and under what law or regulation, a cablegram, sent on 14th February to a newspaper at Cape Town, recording the proceedings of a conference held at the Westminster Palace Hotel on that day, and including a resolution of sympathy with the Cape and Natal Ministries, has been stopped by the censor at Cape Town.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): No information has reached this office that such a telegram was stopped at Cape Town or elsewhere.

MR. CHANNING: I shall put a further question on the subject.

THE COLONIES AND THE COST OF THE WAR.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is proposed to ask Australia, Canada, or any of the colonies to bear any portion of the cost of the present war, or whether all the expenses of military operations are to be paid solely by the taxpayers of Great Britain and Ireland.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke): Is it proposed to give to Australia, Canada, or any of the colonies 103 representatives in the House of Commons?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): If the hon. Member will refer to Command Paper 18, presented in November last, he will find, at page 6, the information he desires with regard

to the charges falling on Canada and the Australasian colonies.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Are we to understand that the colonies will bear no portion of the £60,000,000?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: They are contributing towards their own forces.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman say that some arrangement should be considered whereby each portion of the Empire should pay towards the cost, and not leave it all to fall on the unfortunate taxpayers of this country?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: If Australia does not pay I don't see why Ireland should.

INDIAN AND COLONIAL FORCES— PROPOSED IMPERIAL GUARDS.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the services rendered to the Empire by the Indian and Colonial troops now serving in South Africa, he will recommend that Her Most Gracious Majesty should create a body of Imperial Guards, who should technically form the bodyguards of Her Majesty's representatives in India and the Colonies.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The Secretary of State is not prepared to make such a recommendation at present.

PROPOSED ROYAL IRISH GUARDS.

SIR J. W. MACLURE (Lancashire, Stretford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in consideration of the conduct of the Irish soldiers in the present war, he will advise Her Most Gracious Majesty to allow a regiment to bear the title of the Royal Irish Guards; and whether, under these circumstances, Her Most Gracious Majesty would be pleased to confer the first colonelcy on Lord Roberts.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In answer to my hon. friend, I have to say that a proposal dealing with the subject referred to in his question has been under the consideration of the War

Office, and it will be laid before Her Majesty, and will, I have no doubt, receive favourable consideration.

RETURN ON GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

MR. HOWELL (Denbigh Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when the Return as to Government contracts will be presented which was ordered by the House on 16th February last.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The Return will be presented immediately. The Return was ordered on the 27th ultimo.

ARMY COMMISSIONS.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the direct commissions being offered to young men from the universities, public schools, and colonies will confer seniority over cadets at present receiving military instruction in the Royal Military Academy and Royal Military College; and whether the Secretary of State will consider the propriety of ante-dating the commissions of such cadets when they receive them, so that they may not be superseded by officers who have entered the Army without having received any preliminary instruction.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The direct commissions offered to universities and colonies will not be given to candidates under the age of twenty, who will thus be in most cases senior in age to the cadets leaving the Royal Military Academy and Royal Military College. Any special measures adopted to meet the abnormal requirements of the present moment must necessarily produce to a certain extent results of the kind to which the hon. Member's question points. To ante-date the commissions would do more harm than good, as it would lead to the supersession of those actually serving.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: Has it not been often done by cadets who have passed the higher examinations going out to higher positions and superseding those already serving in the Army?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I must ask for notice of that.

BRITISH TROOPS IN EGYPT AND THE COLONIES.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will state, with regard to the sixteen battalions shown at page three of his Memorandum on the Army Estimates to have been in June last in Egypt and the colonies, how many were in Egypt, how many in the self-governing colonies, and how many in Crown colonies and other dependencies.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): There were in June last three battalions in Egypt, two in self-governing colonies and eleven and a half in Crown colonies and other dependencies.

REMOUNTS—IRISH HORSES.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state the number of horses purchased for the Army in Ireland during the last year; and whether, in view of the number of Irish horses suitable for Army purposes, he will see that at least a fair proportion of the War Office orders for horses are placed in Ireland.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The number of horses purchased in Ireland during the last twelve months is 4,746. Every effort is made—

MR. T. M. HEALY: No, no! No effort at all.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Every effort is made to obtain horses for the Army in Ireland, but trained horses of suitable ages are very difficult to obtain there.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is it not the fact that no agents whatever are appointed to purchase horses in the south of Ireland?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: It is not necessary. The Remount Department is sufficiently strong for all purposes of purchase.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Can the hon. Gentleman say how many of the horses purchased in Austria were got out of sires sent out of Ireland for that purpose?

[No answer was given.]

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Can the hon. Gentleman say what proportion of the total of horses he mentioned was purchased in Munster?

[No answer was given.]

3RD DRAGOON GUARDS—ABSENCE OF OFFICERS ON REMOUNT DUTY.

MR. YERBURGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether both the commanding officer and the second in command of the 3rd Dragoon Guards have at the same time been away from their regiment on remount duty, and, if so, for how long they have been away and in what countries, and whether they are still absent from their regiment; whether it is usual for the military authorities to deprive a cavalry regiment of the services of its two senior commanding officers at the same time, and if not, why they have done so in the present instance; and whether such a course is detrimental to the efficiency of the regiment.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Both the officers referred to have been absent for nearly five months from their regiment on special employment, but only the second in command abroad. It is unusual thus to deprive a regiment of its two senior officers; but the circumstances are unusual and it has been necessary to make the best arrangements possible for obtaining horses and mules, of which between 60,000 and 70,000 have been landed in South Africa.

ALDERSHOT GOVERNMENT RAILWAY STATION.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the Government railway siding near the Ordnance Store at Aldershot has no roof or covering of any description; and that many thousands of soldiers entrained at this siding during the last few months on their way to embark at Southampton for South Africa; whether, on many occasions, the soldiers were exposed to the rain on this siding, and had to embark in wet clothes, to the injury of their health; and whether he will make provision for the erection of a roof or covering to this siding.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): It is true that the siding

has no roof or covering. An estimate of the cost of erecting a roof has been called for, and I hope it will be possible to remedy this deficiency without delay.

VOLUNTEER COMMISSIONS.

MR. ORR-EWING (Ayr Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether all retired officers who have volunteered their services to fill vacancies in the Auxiliary forces must first be nominated and recommended by some commanding officer having such vacancies; whether the commanding officers have at their disposal any list of the names of officers who have thus volunteered, and whether the officers who have volunteered have any means of knowing which commanding officers have vacancies; and whether a list of regiments in the Auxiliary forces having vacancies could be sent to the depôts of all regimental districts.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. In regard to the second paragraph, commanding officers keep lists of candidates. Candidates can ascertain by easy reference to the Monthly Army List what vacancies exist. In regard to the third paragraph, as the officers commanding regimental districts are already well aware of the vacancies existing in their command, the list suggested is unnecessary.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE VOLUNTEERS—RIFLE PRACTICE.

GENERAL RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that for some years past, ever since the introduction of the Lee-Metford rifle, three battalions of Volunteers, one battalion of Militia, and a regiment of Yeomanry in Gloucestershire have been unable to practise rifle shooting in such a manner as would enable them to become efficient or useful marksmen on service; whether he is aware that the War Office have hitherto refused to give any assistance towards the establishment of a proper range; and whether, in view of recent events in South Africa, there is any prospect of the Government now seeing their way to reconsider their decision.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): I am aware that some

of the Volunteer corps in Gloucestershire have had considerable difficulties in regard to their rifle practice. It is hoped that with the additional funds now at his disposal for this purpose the Secretary of State for War will be able to give Volunteer corps greater assistance in obtaining range accommodation. The distribution of the sum is now under consideration.

VOLUNTEERS—INSTRUCTION GRANTS.

GENERAL RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether there is any prospect of the Government holding out additional inducements to Volunteers, in shape of personal allowance, so as to enable them to attend a camp or school of instruction for such periods as are really calculated to increase their efficiency.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The points referred to will, as foreshadowed in the Secretary of State's Memorandum on the Army Estimates, not be lost sight of.

VOLUNTEERS—CAMP REGULATIONS.

SIR J. KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when the new regulations in regard to attendance at camps will be issued for Volunteers; and if he can hold out hopes of giving assistance towards the building of drill halls for companies not headquarter companies.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The whole question of assistance to Volunteer corps for camps and other purposes is under consideration, and it is not possible to reply at present to the right hon. Member's question.

VOLUNTEERS—POSITION ARTILLERY.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is intended to re-arm the Volunteer position artillery, armed at present with old-fashioned 20 and 40-pounders, with the 4.7 guns; and whether the Government will consider the advisability of giving a special boot grant to Volunteer corps, in order that the men may appear provided with the regulation boot when called up on mobilisation.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): A certain number of Volun.

teer position batteries will be armed with 4.7 guns. The answer to the right hon. Member for the Honiton Division of Devonshire covers the second paragraph of this question.

VOLUNTEERS — DRILL HALLS AND ARMOURIES — OFFICERS' DECORATION.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Government intend aiding Volunteer corps to provide suitable armouries and drill halls for drilling at night in the winter and spring months, thereby increasing the efficiency of the force; and whether the Government could see their way to allowing Volunteer officers with previous service in the Militia and Yeomanry to count such service towards earning the Volunteer officers' decoration.

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS** (for **MR. WYNDHAM**): I will have the suggestion contained in the second paragraph considered, but it has been suggested to me that it would impair the value of the Volunteer decoration if service in any other part of Her Majesty's forces was allowed to count towards earning it.

MILITIA—DISCHARGE REGULATIONS.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state whether the regulations permit a Militiaman to purchase his discharge for the sum of £1, and then, presuming he is otherwise eligible, to join a Royal Reserve battalion, which renders him liable for one year's home service only, and obtain for that year's service the sum of £22 in addition to his daily pay.

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS** (for **MR. WYNDHAM**): All discharges by purchase from Militia units, whether embodied or not, have been suspended until further orders.

NAVY—ENGINEERING CONTRACTS—SCALE OF WAGES.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he can state the rate of wages now being paid for unskilled labour by engineering firms within the area of the county of London engaged upon contract work for the Government.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMI-

RALTY (**MR. W. E. MACARTNEY**, Antrim, S.): I cannot state the rate of wages.

INDIA—THE FAMINE AND THE LAND REVENUE.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether any general instructions have been issued by the Government of India to be lenient in collecting the land revenue from cultivators in the districts affected by famine; and whether he is aware that in the Alibagh district of Bombay special promptitude in payment is being enforced, and that an unusually large number of notices have been issued to defaulters at a cost to them of four annas for each notice.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (**LORD G. HAMILTON**, Middlesex, Ealing): The famine codes lay down that the collector, in the early stages of a famine, is to consider the question of suspending the land revenue in distressed tracts, and empower him to grant such suspensions of his own authority. I have received no information to the effect suggested in the hon. Member's second question.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: Will the noble Lord make inquiry?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I hardly think it is necessary.

INDIA — EDUCATIONAL TEXT BOOKS.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to a recent circular of the Government of India in the Educational Department, under which unaided schools are required to make use of text books approved by the Director of Public Instruction under penalty of the exclusion of their pupils from public examinations; whether he has sanctioned this new departure; and whether he will state what advantage is obtained from limiting the free choice of text books by schools receiving no grant from Government.

LORD G. HAMILTON: The resolution of the Government of India, to which the hon. Member refers, has not yet come before me officially for sanction, though I am officially cognisant of its contents. It is there stated that in the opinion of the Government of India the State, while it does not undertake to prescribe text

books for unaided schools, is justified in excluding from the examinations for certificates and for Government scholarships the pupils of schools which use test books disapproved by Government, and that this is done on the ground that the State has a direct interest in the course of instruction given in all schools, whether aided financially by the State or not.

NATIVE INDIAN REGIMENTS.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the two Native Indian regiments to be borne on the Estimates are existing regiments at present forming part of the Native Army in India, or are they to be raised in India by the British Government.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The regiments form part of the existing Indian Army.

MR. BUCHANAN: Will the Home Government pay the capitation grant to the Government of India?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I must ask for notice of that.

INDIAN FAMINE — PROPOSED CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether upon the recommendation of the Premier of Western Australia, the Australian colonies are considering the payment of a grant of £20,000 from the public revenues towards the relief of sufferers from the famine in India; and whether any decision has been arrived at in reference to this suggestion.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have received no information on the subject.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOLDFIELDS.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received representations as to the grievances under which the inhabitants of the Goldfields districts of Western Australia allege they are labouring; whether he is aware that they complain in particular of the unfair distribution of political power, 5,674 electors in the mining constituency of East Coolgardie returning only one member,

while 5,650 electors in the pastoral districts return twenty-one members; and whether he contemplates any action with a view to removing such grievances and putting an end to the discontent that now prevails on the Western Australian Goldfields.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Rev. Mr. O'Gorman, who has been delegated by the inhabitants of the Goldfields districts, has personally made a representation to my Department on the subject of the grievances of the Goldfields districts of Western Australia. He has been requested to put his representations in writing, in order that they may be communicated to the Government of the colony for consideration.

JAMAICA RAILWAY.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies when the arrangement made by the Colonial Government of Jamaica concerning the Jamaica Railway will be completed and the debentures exchanged for Colonial stock, as undertaken by the Colonial Government of that colony.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The arrangements are so far completed that as soon as the decision of the Court in Jamaica has been given, which is now being awaited, the debentures will be exchanged for Colonial stock.

WINDWARD ISLANDS.

MR. ENGLEDEW (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the office of the Crown Agents for the Colonies execute orders for the government of the Windward Islands; and whether any commission is paid to such office on such orders; and, if so, from what source is this commission paid.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir; the Crown Agents for the Colonies execute orders for the three Colonial Governments which constitute the Windward Islands; those Governments, like those of all other Crown colonies, pay to their office a commission of 1 per cent. on all stores supplied through them under arrangements which have been in force since 1886.

CHINA—EQUAL TRADE RIGHTS FOR ALL NATIONS.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I beg to ask the

Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government will actively co-operate with the United States Government in the endeavour to arrive at an agreement between the Powers interested in China which will secure equal opportunities for the trade of all nations throughout the Chinese Empire, irrespective of any territorial changes that may take place.

***THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford):** Papers on this subject will shortly be laid before the House.

CHINA—NANNING FU—TREATY PORTS.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the opening of Nanning Fu as a treaty port, as announced by Her Majesty's Government early last year, has been carried out; and, if not, what steps are being taken to enforce this; and whether Her Majesty's Government will insist on the opening of the inland waterways of China in accordance with the agreement under which British ships were to be able to take British goods to every riverside town and station.

***MR. BRODRICK:** Her Majesty's Minister at Peking has repeatedly pressed the Chinese Government to carry out the opening of Nanning. They still await the report of the Governor of the province on the arrangements that will be necessary, but have promised Sir C. MacDonald to direct him to send it in without delay. The navigation of the inland waters by British vessels has been successfully initiated in various parts of China. The papers shortly to be laid before the House will show that considerable progress has been made. Her Majesty's Minister at Peking will continue to give careful attention to the matter.

UGANDA RAILWAY.

MR. ENGLEDEW: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the office of the Crown Agents for the Colonies is receiving any commission or percentage on the value of material of any kind shipped for construction of the Uganda Railway; and whether any commission or percentage is paid on freight of said material; if so,

what is the rate per cent., and what is the total amount paid to date.

***MR. BRODRICK:** The office of the Crown Agents for the Colonies receives a commission of 1 per cent. on the cost of all materials and stores shipped by them for the Uganda Railway. Freight, being a part of the cost, is charged with this commission. The total amount paid as commission since 1896 up to date is £15,090 18s. 7d.

CAPE TO CAIRO TELEGRAPH.

MR. ENGLEDEW: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs by what line of steamers the material for construction of Cape to Cairo telegraph has been conveyed to Chinde.

***MR. BRODRICK:** This is not a Government undertaking, and we have no knowledge of the methods employed for sending out the material in question.

COUNTY COURT FEES.

***SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean):** I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the increase in the estimated amount receivable from fees by suitors in county courts in the next financial year implies that there are to be no considerable reductions made in the rate of fees receivable in county courts.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): No, Sir.

TELEPHONING CABLEGRAMS.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is yet in a position to announce if the postal regulations will be so modified that the cable companies may telephone to their clients cablegrams received after business hours, and that the addressees may telephone replies for transmission by submarine cable, without being subjected to the delay involved in sending such messages through the Post Office.

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General hopes to secure the co-operation of the American cable companies in an experimental arrangement made to expedite the delivery of cable messages at Liverpool. Between the hours of 8 and

9 or 9.30 p.m. such messages will be telephoned direct from the Exchange Post Office, which immediately adjoins the offices of the four American cable companies, to those addressees who are subscribers to the system of the National Telephone Company, and the subscribers will also be able to telephone their replies direct to the Exchange Post Office. This arrangement will save the time hitherto occupied in conveying messages by hand between the offices of the cable companies at the Exchange and the head post office, and it will be made permanent should the use made of it prove sufficient to justify such a course.

PROMOTION IN THE TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

SIR FRANCIS EVANS (Southampton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether a memorial has been received calling attention to the stagnation of promotion in the telegraph department; and whether a revision of the staff is in contemplation; and, if so, whether it is the intention to make additional superior appointments to relieve the pressure at a maximum.

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has not received any general memorial to this effect from the telegraph staff of the Department. If the hon. Member refers to the staff of some particular office, perhaps he will mention the name of the office.

MONAGHAN POST OFFICE.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, has the Monaghan post office been condemned as insanitary; have the postmaster and his family been obliged owing to considerations of health to leave the post office and take up their residence in another portion of the town; is he aware that the excessive prevalence of sickness at present in Monaghan is generally attributed to the distribution of infection from this centre of disease; has the Department invited offers of sites for the erection of a new post office, and have any offers been received; and when may the public of Monaghan hope to be relieved from the growing danger which menaces them in the existence of the present post office.

MR. HANBURY: The post office premises have not been condemned as insanitary. The postmaster, to whom they belong, has been allowed to give up living in them because they are small and more room is required for the duties. The post office is not a centre of infection. On the contrary, the official records show that the health of the staff is distinctly above the average. Offers of sites for a new office have been invited, but as yet none have been received. It is impossible, therefore, to state when the present office can be abandoned.

IRISH RAILWAY AMALGAMATION—LIMERICK HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Limerick Harbour Commissioners have paid all instalments of interest and principal due to the Irish Board of Works up to date; whether the amount of the loan from the Board of Works has been reduced by £35,480, and the expenditure of the Commissioners is kept well under their revenue; if so, whether he can say on what special grounds the Board of Works warned the Harbour Commissioners not to incur expense in opposing the Great Southern and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill; and whether he will see that the Board of Works do not further interfere to prevent the Harbour Commissioners taking any action they deem proper in the exercise of their constitutional rights to influence Parliament concerning the Railways Amalgamation Bill now awaiting its decision.

MR. HANBURY: The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The amount of the loans due to the Board of Works has been reduced by £26,517 10s. (not £35,480). The expenditure of the Harbour Commissioners has in recent times been kept under the revenue. But I may remind the hon. Member that in 1868 loans to the Commissioners were remitted to the extent of £58,863 principal and £46,803 interest. The Board of Works cannot prevent the Harbour Commissioners from incurring this expenditure if it is legal. If it is illegal they are, of course, bound to protect their own interest. Their action has no other motive.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman receive a deputation from the Commissioners?

MR. HANBURY: The Board of Works are offering no opposition and no encouragement to the Bill; they are standing neutral.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Has not the Board of Works sent a letter warning these people not to incur further expense in opposing the Bill in this House unless they get permission to do so?

[No answer was given.]

ROSSLARE AND FERMOY RAILWAYS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Irish Board of Works have taken any steps recently, and, if so, when, and what action to compel the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to make the new railways from Rosslare to Waterford and from Fermoy to Cork, authorised by the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Act, 1897, and which railways the company undertook in 1897 to construct without postponement; and whether the Treasury, on the advice of the Board of Works, agreed to cancel a large debt on the understanding such railways would be forthwith made.

MR. HANBURY: As this question did not appear upon the Paper till this morning I can only say that I am not aware of any such steps. Moreover, while Parliament fixed a limit of time for the construction of the railways in question, it did not, so far as I know, impose upon the Treasury and the Board of Works the duty of hastening their construction. As the hon. Member will see from the schedule to the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Act, 1898, the debt owed by the Fishguard Company is not to be cancelled. It will be discharged by a payment of a sum of £93,000. An equivalent grant of the same amount has been promised to be paid in two instalments as the works proceed.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Have the works in Wexford been commenced at all?

MR. HANBURY: I understand that they have.

SEVERAL NATIONALIST MEMBERS: No.

SCOTTISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT STATISTICS.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that, since the passing of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, many parishes have ceased to publish to their ratepayers a list of paupers and details of intromissions; and whether, in ceasing to publish these particulars, these parishes are complying with the wish of the Local Government Board.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The reply to the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question is in the affirmative. The Board, I am informed, have frequently urged upon parochial boards and parish councils the advisability of printing lists of the paupers on their rolls, but they have no power to enforce compliance.

SCOTTISH PARISH TRUST ACCOUNTS.

MR. CROMBIE: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate is it the purpose of the Local Government Board to require publicity to be given to the accounts of parish trusts, as contemplated under Section 30 (7) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The circumstances of the various trusts are so diverse that great difficulty arises in framing such an order as is contemplated in the section referred to, but the matter has not been lost sight of.

IMPROVEMENT OF LAND ACTS—EXPENDITURE.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture what have been the amounts of expenditure charged upon estates under the several Improvement of Land Acts and Limited Owners' Residences Acts for (a) farm buildings; (b) labourers' cottages; (c) mansion houses, etc., in the years 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, and 1899, respectively.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): The amounts of the expenditure which have been charged under the Improvement of Land Acts and Limited Owners' Residences Acts during each of the last five years for the purposes to which the hon. Member refers.

have been as follows:—Farm buildings, £49,326, £66,875, £58,382, £48,119, and £43,241; labourers' cottages, £9,535, £10,126, £8,861, £11,691, and £18,306; mansion houses, etc., £28,736, £58,533, £34,208, £9,629, and £22,906.

MUZZLING ORDER IN CARMARTHEN.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthenshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can state when he hopes to be able to withdraw the muzzling order now in force in the county of Carmarthen.

*MR. LONG: I am not yet in a position to name a date for the withdrawal of the muzzling order now in force in certain portions of Carmarthenshire, Breconshire, and Glamorganshire, but the position is much improved, no case of rabies having been discovered in the scheduled district since the 10th November last. I hope, therefore, that it may not be necessary to keep the order in force for any very prolonged period.

THE POLICE AND PUBLIC MEETINGS.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that in different parts of the country public meetings have been broken up and assaults committed on many of Her Majesty's subjects in consequence of their political opinions; and whether, if it should appear to him that the police force of any county or borough have been remiss in the performance of their duty of protecting the persons and property of the people, he will regard such conduct as justifying him in withholding his certificate of the efficiency of such police force.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have received no complaints of such occurrences as are referred to in the first paragraph. It is impossible to answer categorically the hypothetical question in the second paragraph. Of course if habitual remissness on the part of the police in protecting persons and property were proved to have existed, it would be an element in considering whether or not the force could be certified as efficient.

RIOTS AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the recent riots in Stratford-on-Avon, and to the statement of Mr. H. H. Bullar that his house was invaded by a mob, who broke the windows and damaged or completely destroyed his whole stock of old china and antique furniture; and what steps are being taken by the Government to protect peaceable citizens from such proceedings.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: The question only appeared on the Paper this morning. I will make inquiry into the matter.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT— SYSONS v. KNOWLES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the judgment of the Court of Appeal in *Sysons v. Knowles and Sons, Limited*, by which it is decided that in order to come within the benefit of the Workmen's Compensation Act, the applicant must have been at the time of the accident in the master's employment for at least two weeks; and whether, having regard to the effects of this decision, he will introduce, or will support, a Bill to amend the Act in this respect.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: The decision appears to me to be of such importance that I should like time to consider the matter and put it before my colleagues before I answer the question.

THE BUDGET—CUSTOM HOUSE CLEARANCES.

*SIR J. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state approximately the amounts paid at the custom houses in the United Kingdom on Saturday and Monday in anticipation of the extra duties to be imposed by the Budget, and whether it would be practicable in future years to prevent or diminish such anticipatory payments by making it a condition that the new or additional duties should be surcharged on all payments made between the announcement of the date of the Budget and the passing of the Budget resolutions.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is not possible to give an exact figure, but the payments in the two days will, I expect, amount to about two and a quarter millions, whereas under ordinary conditions they would average about £180,000. I quite agree with the suggestion that some steps should be taken to diminish or prevent the loss of revenue caused by these large anticipatory payments, but I am afraid the actual plan suggested by the Hon. Member would not quite meet the case. It is not always possible, when a man has once cleared goods at the lower rate, to recover a surcharge. But I am carefully considering the subject, and hope to be able before the Committee stage of the Finance Bill to make some definite proposal for dealing with the matter.

MR. BARTLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman let us know the names, so that we may know whether we are getting their goods cheaper in consequence?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: These goods are often—in fact, I may say generally—cleared, not by the persons who retail them, but by wholesale dealers.

NEW STAMP DUTIES.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is proposed that the new stamp duty on produce contracts shall apply to all descriptions of produce, including sugar, cotton, corn, provisions, and iron; whether it will be levied on both spot and future transactions; whether it will apply to all sales through the medium of a broker, either off or on a produce exchange; and whether sales between principals without the intervention of a broker will be free from the said duty.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The answer to all four paragraphs of the question is in the affirmative.

*MR. HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, under the terms of the Budget resolution passed on Tuesday last, it is contemplated that all trade contracts negotiated between principals by an intermediate broker or agent shall become liable to the new stamp duty, and, if not so contemplated, whether he will insert words expressly to exclude such contracts.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The intention is that the new stamp duty should be attracted by the advice note sent to his principal by "any person carrying on the business of a broker" advising him of the sale or purchase of any goods. The contracts resulting from the brokers' negotiations will not attract the duty.

*MR. HOLLAND: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly consent to see in his private room one or two gentlemen who will explain the serious effect this will have on the cotton trade of Manchester?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am about to receive a deputation on the subject.

SUGAR CULTIVATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

COLONEL MILWARD (Stratford-upon-Avon): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the promise he has made to consider any restrictions preventing the growth of tobacco in Ireland, and to endeavour to remove them, he will also endeavour to remove the restrictive conditions preventing the growth of sugar in England, Scotland, and Ireland generally, should the experiments now in progress prove that without the restrictive conditions referred to sugar beet would be a large and profitable crop for the farmers of this country.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am not aware of any restrictive conditions on the growth of sugar in the United Kingdom.

EDUCATION GRANTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the effect of the arrangements made by the Departmental Committee appointed under the minute of 4th July, 1899, and named in the Education Department's Return of 12th February, 1900, will be to leave in the hands of the Science and Art Department the regulation of the conditions under which grants for science, art, and technology may be earned by secondary schools; and whether any further steps have been taken to give effect to the undertaking of the Government to establish a third branch of the Education Department to deal with the special interests of secondary schools.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): The conditions under which science and art grants are paid to secondary schools are regulated by the Committee of Council, and will after April 1st be regulated by the Board of Education. Grants for technical instruction were suspended in Great Britain, but not in Ireland, in 1891. The conditions in Ireland are at present regulated by the Committee of Council. The arrangements for establishing a third branch of the Board of Education are still under consideration.

BELFAST BOROUGH FUNDS.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland if the Belfast Borough Act, 8 and 9 Vic. c. 142, Section 21, requiring the council to cause an annual account in abstract to be prepared, showing the total receipts and expenditure of all funds levied by virtue of this Act ending 31st December, has been complied with by transmitting a copy of same to the town clerk of the borough on or before 31st January following in each year, under a forfeit of £20, and is he aware that a levy of rates has been made for the quarter ending 31st March, 1900, and again for the year ending 31st March, 1901, without the said abstract of accounts for the year ending 31st December, 1899, having been made out; and will he take steps to enforce compliance with this statute in respect of the abstract of accounts referred to being transmitted to the town clerk before the council confirm the rates proposed to be levied for the year commencing 31st March, 1900.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, London-derry, N.): Section 21 of the Act of 1845 provides for the preparation of an annual account in abstract showing the total receipts and expenditure of all funds levied by virtue of that Act. The only rate created by the Act of 1845 was the police rate, and there was, in addition, at that time only one other rate levied in the borough—namely, the borough rate. Since 1845, however, the corporation has obtained over twenty Acts of Parliament, and concurrently with the great increase in the extent of the city and the number

of its population, there has taken place a correspondingly large increase in the volume of the accounts to be dealt with, so that, however feasible it might formerly have been to comply with the statutory requirement in regard to the period within which the abstract of the accounts shall be prepared, it is not possible at the present day to comply literally with the provisions of the Act of 1845 in this respect. The town clerk submits, reasonably, so I think, that it would be absurd to deal with the accounts of the corporation in sections, and that the present system of publishing the abstracts of all the funds after the audit of the accounts is the natural and correct method and most adapted to the circumstances of the present time. Any ratepayer can sue the corporation for the penalty of £20 prescribed by the statute. It is not a matter calling for the intervention of the Executive.

IRISH COUNTY SURVEYORS' EXAMINATIONS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if a candidate for the office of county surveyor, who has acted as *locum tenens* of that officer and who had passed the qualifying examination and had efficiently discharged his duties, is required to pass a fresh examination before his appointment to the office of county surveyor will be sanctioned.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): A second examination has been held to be required by the terms of the County Surveyors Act, 1862. It is, I think, an inconvenient and unreasonable condition to be applied universally, and the propriety of modifying or dispensing with it is now under consideration of the Government.

MONAGHAN LUNATIC ASYLUM CHAPEL.

MR. ARCHDALE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that though, as shown by the minutes of the Asylums Board of 11th February, 1897, the chapel in the Monaghan Lunatic Asylum was built for the use of all denominations, and even an order placed on the books that no religious emblems were to be placed on or in the building, the present committee of management have

allowed various emblems to be introduced into the chapel and prohibited the Protestant chaplain entirely from holding service in the chancel ; and whether he is aware that in consequence a new chapel costing over £2,000 is to be built and the rates burdened to that extent, while the Protestant inmates are in the meantime deprived of their usual religious ministrations.

MR. MACALEESE: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the question, I beg to ask the following, of which I have given him private notice: Whether it was a fact that from the beginning it was well understood that the church was to be devoted to the accommodation of the Catholic patients only; was the church not built by the Board of Governors with the approval and sanction of the Board of Control to meet the requirements of Catholic worship; were the Catholic emblems, to which exception had now been taken for the first time, not visible during the construction of the church; had not the Lord Bishop of Clogher and the Catholic members of the Asylum Committee made reasonable concessions to meet the interests of Protestant patients during the erection of the new Protestant church; and is the present movement anything more than an outburst of local bigotry to deprive the Catholic patients of the great spiritual advantage which the new church has conferred on them.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The question cannot be allowed in that form.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The chapel in the Monaghan Lunatic Asylum was originally intended, I am informed, for the use of all denominations, but it was subsequently decided to reserve it exclusively for Roman Catholics and to build another place of worship for Protestants. Steps have been taken to proceed with the latter work, and in the meantime the arrangements for divine service for the Protestant inmates must necessarily be of a temporary nature. The medical superintendent of the asylum states that with the view of rendering the building appropriate for the Protestant service, the Roman Catholic altar is screened off during the celebration of the Protestant service, but that the Episcopalian chaplain complains that this screen is placed outside instead of inside the chancel rails. The responsibility in the matter is vested

exclusively in the committee of management, and the Executive have no power to interfere. As to the supplementary question of the hon. Member for North Monaghan, he will see that I have answered the three first paragraphs; as to the fourth, I have no information; while I must respectfully decline to answer the fifth.

RIOTING AT COALISLAND.

*MR. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that an Orange party fired upon a Roman Catholic band near Coalisland on the night of the 1st March; whether the police, who were present on the occasion of the firing, took a loaded gun from one man and an iron poker from another; and whether steps will be taken to maintain the peace of the neighbourhood and to prevent a recurrence of such proceedings.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): It appears that late on the night of the 1st inst. some shots were fired in the direction of a Nationalist drumming party near Coalisland. No person, I am happy to say, was injured. The police who accompanied the party at once went in pursuit of the persons by whom it was believed the shots were fired, but failed to capture them. One man, however, was found with a piece of iron about a foot in length in his possession, which was taken from him. A rifle, which was unloaded and which did not appear to have been used on the occasion, was subsequently found lying beside a ditch. The following morning a pistol was found on the road which had been traversed by the drumming party. The weapon had evidently been dropped by one of this party. With reference to the last paragraph, it is the paramount duty of the police to preserve the peace in this as in every other district. But there are occasions when it is very difficult to succeed in that object. In the present instance, a drumming party went out suddenly in the darkness of night for the ostensible purpose of making a counter demonstration to the celebration by loyalists in the locality of the relief of Ladysmith. It is obvious that the police, though they may do their utmost to preserve the peace, cannot altogether prevent a collision between the opposing parties.

*MR. DOOGAN: Arising out of that answer, I would ask the right hon. Gen-

tleman, is he aware that the Nationalist parade was held, in pursuance of a local custom, to celebrate annually the 1st of March?

MR. ATKINSON: I have no knowledge of that fact. If such a custom exist, it apparently only occurred to them for the first time on this occasion.

IRISH PRISON EXERCISE YARDS.

DR. TANNER (Cork County, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in how many prisons in Ireland are there open air exercise yards with shelters in case of rain, and how do the ordinary prisons compare with convict prisons in Ireland. Is he aware that owing to the humidity of climate, prisoners are frequently given their two hours daily exercise in the rain, and often no exercise in consequence of no sheltered yard being provided; and whether any steps will be taken to remedy this state of things.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): Covered shelters are provided in the exercise yards attached to the prisons at Kilmainham, Maryborough, and Dundalk. In connection with all the large male prisons similar sheds are provided for prisoners employed at stone-breaking and other work. In the case of rain these sheds are availed of to a certain extent for shelter. There is no distinction between ordinary and convict prisons in this respect. There is no foundation for the statement in the second paragraph. In the opinion of the Prisons Board the present practice, which works satisfactorily, does not require alteration. There are, moreover, obvious objections to the erection of buildings in exercise yards where such would interfere with sunshine and the free circulation of air.

DR. TANNER: Am I to understand that prisoners are not occasionally exercised in the rain, and that on very wet days they get no exercise whatsoever?

MR. ATKINSON: I have answered that according to my belief there is no foundation for the statement.

DR. TANNER: I shall raise this question on the Estimates.

TRINITY COLLEGE STUDENTS, DUBLIN.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland

whether he is aware that within the past week a number of students of Trinity College, Dublin, were convicted of assaulting Constable M'Sharry, 89 B, and attempting to rescue a prisoner, and that penalties of £1 each were inflicted; whether he is aware that two labourers, convicted of assault on a constable and rescue of a prisoner on Monday last, were committed to prison for six months, and ordered to find bail for their future good behaviour; and whether he will ask the magistrates who tried these cases to explain the circumstances which influenced them in giving such different sentences for the same offence. In putting the question, may I supplement it with the words which were omitted at the Table—namely, did the assault consist of kicking the policeman and smashing his helmet?

*MR. SPEAKER: If anything was omitted at the Table the hon. Member should appeal to me on the subject, and not put it in the form of a supplementary question.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Is it not a proper question to ask as to the nature of the assault?

*MR. SPEAKER: It would depend on the language in which it was couched.

MR. ATKINSON: I have called for, but have not yet received, a report in reference to the first and second paragraphs of this question, which I may observe only appeared on the Paper this morning. As regards the last paragraph, I cannot, as suggested, on behalf of the Executive call upon magistrates to give the reasons for their decisions. If the hon. Member will repeat his question on Monday I shall endeavour to reply.

TOBACCO CULTIVATION IN IRELAND.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland whether he is now prepared to make a representation to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a view to removing any restrictions which exist to growing tobacco in Ireland.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. PLUNKETT, Dublin County, S.): When a desire is manifested on the part of Irish farmers to grow

tobacco, it will be time to make representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a view to the removal of any restrictions which may interfere with its profitable cultivation. Irish farmers will probably await the result of further experiments, which are in contemplation for the present year.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman's Department bear in mind the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he would view with favour the removal of these restrictions?

MR. PLUNKETT: Certainly.

METROPOLITAN PARLIAMENTARY DIVISIONS.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill during the present session to alter the boundaries of the Parliamentary divisions of the metropolis, so that they may correspond with the municipal areas as settled by the Commissioners under the powers of the London Government Act, 1899.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The answer to the question is in the negative.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is proposed, as usual, to leave over one or two of the Naval Estimates so that the discussion on naval affairs may be resumed later in the session?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): Yes, I propose to postpone Vote 8 (Shipbuilding, Repairs, Maintenance, etc.), and not to take the Report on Vote 12 (Admiralty Office), so that there will be an opportunity for discussion later in the session.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Can the Leader of the House say what will be the business for Monday next?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman is well within his rights in asking, and I regret that I am unable to give an absolutely conclusive answer. I have little doubt that the Government will be able to take the Army Estimates first on Monday, but that arrangement to

a certain extent depends upon my hon. friend the Under Secretary for War, whose health, I am sorry to say, is not yet fully restored; but I believe that my hon. friend will be in a position to make his statement on Monday upon the motion that the Speaker leave the chair. I also understand that on a very early day the Chancellor of the Exchequer will introduce his Loan Bill, arising out of the Budget, and that Bill will probably be the first order on Tuesday. If so, the discussion on the Army Estimates will be interrupted for that purpose.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): When is it proposed to take the Second Reading of the Factories and Workshops Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Not to-night.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): Will the Ecclesiastical Assessments Bill be taken to-night?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: What will be the order of business, should the Navy Estimates be got through early to-night?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not expect there will be much time for any Bills except the first on the Paper. We propose to take the Bills in their order.

THE QUEEN AND THE IRISH PEOPLE.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford, City): Mr. Speaker, I have to ask the indulgence of the House for a moment in order to enable me to say that the Irish people will receive with gratification the announcement that Her Majesty has directed that for the future the shamrock shall be worn by all Irish regiments on Ireland's national festival. The Irish people will welcome this graceful recognition of the valour of their race—whatever the field upon which that valour has latest been exhibited—and our people will, moreover, treat with respect the visit which the venerable Sovereign proposes to make to their shores, well knowing that on this occasion no attempt will be made to give that visit a party significance, and that their chivalrous hospitality will be taken in no quarter to mean any abatement of their demand for their national rights, which they will

continue to press until they are conceded.

BOILERS REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION (No. 3) BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, 21st March, read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

ELECTORAL DISABILITIES (MILITARY SERVICE) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): This is a Bill to preserve the voting qualification of those who by residence have acquired the franchise, and who for a time would be deprived, and unjustly deprived, of the advantage of that franchise, through having gone abroad in the service of the country. The attention of the Government has naturally been called to the possible disqualification which would attach to those who have in this national emergency gone out of the country to serve the Queen, and who by that means would be deprived of the franchise they have acquired. It seems very unfair that a similar protection should not be accorded to them as was accorded under the Act of 1891 to others. The Bill applies to all classes, whether in the Militia, Yeomanry, or Volunteers, who have gone abroad to serve the country, and who by being abroad might lose the franchise which they have acquired by residence. I observe that an hon. and gallant friend of mine (General Laurie) has given notice of a motion by which he seeks to include similar facilities for relief to the members of the Navy and Army. That is a very different question. I venture to remind the House that the Bill has been introduced not for those who have undertaken regular service under the Crown, whether in the Army or Navy, and who are under obligation to go abroad when their services are required. That is a very different case altogether, and cannot, I think, be properly brought within the provisions of the Bill. This is a Bill intended to apply to those who are practically civilians, and who have by residence acquired the franchise, and who would be deprived of it by the fact that they have gone out in the service of the

country. It seems to the Government that that disability should be removed, and that is the simple object of this Bill of which I now move the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I have some sympathy with the motion made, and also with the motion which appears on the Paper by the hon. and gallant Member for Pembroke. I rather regret that the Government did not widen the Bill in the sense in which he proposes. I think that is a reasonable and a proper thing, but I would like to call the attention of the Government to a curious condition of the law in regard to the question of disciplinary imprisonment inflicted during actual service. We had, the other day, the case of a man of the name of Daniel O'Connor, who while he was on military duty as a Volunteer—as a yeoman—was for some minor offence ordered to be, not imprisoned, but placed on some sort of parole by which he was confined in the camping ground, and the revising barrister struck him off the roll under the law that a man undergoing imprisonment cannot be retained on the register. The Court of Appeal reversed that decision of the revising barrister.

*MR. SPEAKER pointed out that the Bill before the House dealt with the franchise of those who had gone out of the country in the service of the country.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am coming to that. I think that those who have been under military discipline involving punishment would be similarly liable during that time to lose their votes. I think it would be desirable to see that during the entire time these men are absent on service no disqualification from any cause should arise.

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwickshire, Stratford-upon-Avon) observed that he was extremely grateful to the Government for introducing the Bill.

*GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I felt bound, believing that this Bill did not go far enough, to place on the Paper the notice which appears there. I quite realise that this is not an enfranchising Bill, but we do not ask that the soldier should be enfran-

chised. What we ask is that he should not suffer from a disability when the Volunteers, Yeomanry, Militia, or Reserve men are relieved from the process of disqualification. A Reserve man is liable to be sent abroad, and a member of the Militia is liable to be sent to another part of the country for service, and what we ask is that after this war is over all those who have gone abroad should on their return be able to exercise the franchise. Under these proposals a soldier alone would be disqualified because he had been away doing his country's work. It seems to me an invidious distinction to draw, and, that being so, I have felt bound—it is the only thing we could do—to move that the Bill be not read a second time in order to enable me to express that view.

*MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.), in seconding the Amendment, said: I do hopesome consideration will be given to the Regular soldiers. In 1891 a Bill was passed through this House allowing soldiers and sailors to go away on active service for a period not exceeding four months without becoming disqualified. Before that time, if a soldier went away for a period of three months manœuvring or on service, he was struck off the register at the next revision of Parliamentary voters. Some years ago I introduced a Bill to enable soldiers to go away for a period of not exceeding four months without losing their votes. A similar Bill was passed by the Attorney General in 1891. Now that so many soldiers are sent out in the present war, I think some consideration might be made for them. I should not say that they should retain their votes for the whole period of the war, but I think some such period as eight or nine months might be inserted. It is rather hard that men on the staff or in the medical service should lose their votes while they see other men in similar employment go out and still retain their votes. I think it would be only a gracious act to do for soldiers what you propose to do for those in the service who will get the benefit of the Bill. It is not often that the soldiers have the opportunity of recording their votes, but of course, like other people, they highly value the privilege of being able to vote for a Member of Parliament.

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out from the word ‘That,’ to the end of the question, in order to add the words

‘no Bill granting facilities for relief of electoral disabilities to Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers who have proceeded on active service will be satisfactory to this House which does not extend similar facilities for relief to the members of the Royal Navy and Regular Army who are now employed on active service in South Africa,’ instead thereof.”—(*General Laurie.*)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.”

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): This is a very large Bill in its essence, because it affects not only those who may be serving out of the country, and who by their absence from their habitual occupations would be disqualified, but it gives very special advantages to the classes who are affected by it. Moreover, the same amount of absence from the place of habitation is not a disability so long as the person affected is absent on actual military service. That is an enormous revolution so far as it goes in the existing law of this country—to say that during the whole of this time he shall have the franchise preserved to him although not an inhabitant or occupier. But the thing, large in itself, is made very small by the limitation to the class to which it extends. It extends only to the Reserve men, the Militia, and the Yeomanry. That sets up a very invidious distinction between the voluntary service men and the other service men. It suggests that the one is a volunteer and the other a mercenary, but the fact is that all our forces are voluntary. The fact that men are engaged in the Regular service is not a reason for refusing to them, whether in the Army or Navy, the reservation of this right. You only reserve a right which has been created by the operation of the ordinary law. Is it a reason, because the man is a Volunteer for a longer period, that he should be deprived of his vote? Marines have almost all electoral qualifications, and a great many sailors have homes in the ports where their ships go. Why should they be deprived of the privilege of voting? I think it is very reasonable and generous, at any rate, that the Secretary of State for the Home Department should make a small revolution so far as it goes in the electoral law of this country. The men who are employed in the transport service ought to be included. The ordinary fisherman taken on in the trans-

ports engaged in the military service on behalf of the Crown is a Volunteer, and ought to get the advantage of this proposal; although he is an ordinary citizen, he is really employed in the military service in an auxiliary capacity. Without pledging myself as to the exact way in which it should be done, whatever arguments apply to the Yeomanry and Volunteer forces apply equally to the soldiers and the sailors, and I hope my right hon. friend will consider how he can meet the point.

***SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.):** It occurs to me that under this Bill there lurks a very considerable change in our representative system. For my part I quite agree that the Yeomanry, Militia, and Volunteer forces sent out should not be placed at a disadvantage, but I think that end would be gained without disturbing the electoral system by making this a temporary Act, and the proper course would be to say that this Bill shall only continue in force to the end of April next year, and by that time the war will be over and the necessity for such a structural change will have ceased to exist. I am altogether against the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member opposite, because undoubtedly it would change the whole system if we were to extend to all military men the privilege of being qualified as long as they were absent on service. The Act of 1891 was a very considerate Act, and met the case so far as was necessary for the general purposes of justice. It was not confined to soldiers or military men, sailors, or marines, for whom the hon. Member opposite always speaks so eloquently. It contained a general clause which provided that absence on service should not be a disqualification. I do not think at this particular emergency this House is going to alter and undo what was resolved upon when that Act was passed. The sole object of the Government is to remedy an injustice to those now serving in South Africa, and that is an emergency not likely to occur again for another quarter or half a century. I trust that if this Bill does pass it will be limited in the way I suggest, and will only be a temporary measure which will cease to exist at the close of next year. For these reasons I feel inclined to vote for the

Mr. Gibson Bowles.

Second Reading of the Bill in its present form, and probably the right hon. Gentleman may give an assurance that the suggestion I have ventured to make will be met.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE (London-derry): As the representative of a constituency a very large number of men from which are now actually fighting in South Africa, I think it is a great grievance that they should be deprived of their votes. We are not asking you to enfranchise them, but we are simply asking you not to allow their votes to be taken away because of their absence in South Africa. It is all very well to sit comfortably before a majority of 4,000 or 5,000 votes, but if you sit upon the narrow ledge of a majority of forty-three you have to account for every single vote, and every vote is a matter of vital consequence.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I need scarcely say that it seems to us that it would be departing from the one motive which prompted us in bringing forward this measure if we give the extension which hon. Members are asking for. The principle of this Bill is that we should not disqualify persons who are now upon the register by reason of their voluntary absence when they volunteer for service for the purposes of this war. I may say that we had originally considered the question of making it a temporary measure, and we should have no objection to considering that matter in Committee if it is thought desirable to limit the Bill to some period which is certain of covering the present war. I will give a few reasons to the House why we cannot extend the Bill. If we were to do that it would be opening a very large question. We have had an appeal for the Army. The same sort of appeal might be made for those in our merchant ships, and for the seamen who happen to be engaged on our transports. I would point out that all these persons are engaged under circumstances which will, in the ordinary course of their duty, take them away from the United Kingdom for a period longer than the qualifying period. It does not seem to us that we ought to establish for the purposes of this Bill the principle that when you become a member of a profession requiring your absence over

the qualifying period you should still be enabled to keep your vote. This Bill is brought in to meet a state of facts which exists to-day—namely, that a number of persons have volunteered to go out to South Africa, and to those we desire to limit this Bill. Much as we sympathise with the others, it is not possible for us to extend the Bill; I doubt whether it could be extended, but if it could we do not see our way to do it. A mere extension of eight months or four months would not at all meet the case. The matter we are dealing with is the Volunteers for this war. [AN HON. MEMBER: Are the Reserves Volunteers?] They are considered to be Volunteers, for under ordinary circumstances those Reserves would not have been away from their homes at all. I will deal with the point raised by the hon. Member for King's Lynn. We do not intend this Bill to be a qualifying Bill, putting persons upon the register who are not already there. We are dealing with persons who are already on the register, and who would be liable to be struck off for being away more than four months. They already possess the residential qualification, and we provide that their absence on service shall be no disqualification.

MR. T. M. HEALY: On whom is the burden of proof?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: My hon. and learned friend is aware that we constantly have objections raised to a particular voter on the ground that he has been away more than four months. The man whose vote is challenged has to appear before the revising barrister and prove his claim, and if the man is away in South Africa, that fact will be easily proved before the revising barrister. I hope we have made our meaning clear, and I will consider the suggestions which have been made in the Committee stage.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): said that the great principle laid down by the Attorney General was not carried out by the Bill—that a man qualified one year would not necessarily be qualified the next. If he had been away the whole year, to retain his qualification he would have to have retained his lodging. He was of opinion that the Bill would be of scarcely any advantage to Volunteers. As it now stood, the Bill was a rich man's Bill pure and simple.

MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.) agreed that the Bill was of a very limited scope. It was intended to apply only to those who were already on the register at the beginning of the qualifying year, and only to such of those persons who continued in occupation of the premises which formed the subject matter of the vote. The Bill simply removed in the case of persons who had that continued occupancy what would otherwise be a disqualification by reason of their personal absence from the place of occupation.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The families continue in occupation.

MR. ASQUITH said that might be so, but inasmuch as there must be continued occupancy of the voter under the existing law, that would be ineffective without this Bill. He hoped the Government would adhere to the other principle of the Bill—namely, that it should be confined to those persons now serving in South Africa whose service was not one of the normal conditions of their employment. Unless the Bill were limited in this way, it would, he thought, be a most revolutionary departure in their electoral law.

MR. T. M. HEALY said he quite saw the great force of what the Attorney General had said with regard to the Regular forces; but could not a compromise be made whereby, when soldiers were sent beyond the seas, their franchise should be preserved? That was a reasonable compromise, and afforded a great safeguard to what he hoped would be a temporary measure.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY said that this would be a temporary measure. The suggestion put forward, however, was one which was deserving of consideration in the future if such a measure was made permanent; but the Government having determined to make this a temporary measure, the suggestion of the hon. Member hardly arose at present.

*GENERAL LAURIE, after expressing the hope that the Government might see their way to make some modification in the Bill which would prevent any bitter feeling arising among different portions of their forces, asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick), speaking on the general question, said he did not think the Bill was of such a narrow scope as had been suggested by several hon. Members. In Glasgow alone there were over 2,000 families of soldiers who were being cared for by the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association, and of whom a large proportion, at a guess a half, would come within the scope of the Bill.

Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,715,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Victualling and Clothing for the Navy, including the cost of Victualling Establishments at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

*COMMANDER BTHELL (Yorkshire' E.R., Holderness) said that, although the quality of the provisions supplied to the men in the Navy had improved enormously during recent years, the quantity served out remained exactly the same as it was, he believed, thirty-five years ago. He knew from experience that the meals of the bluejackets were really scarcely sufficient to support them when they had extra hard work to undertake. He was thinking principally of breakfast. It was a very common thing in the service for the men to have breakfast as early as half past five. This meal consisted of a basin of cocoa and some biscuits or bread. Then they—not regularly, but sometimes—went through excessively hard work, which only terminated at dinner time at noon. He did not think there was much fault to be found with the dinner, but after that meal, although they had to go through another long spell of very hard labour, they had nothing

beyond a basin of tea and again bread, which was their tea or supper. There were no serious complaints, he believed, about this course of victualling, but he was also aware how very insufficient both the breakfast and the supper were for the necessities of the case. He thought the time had come when they might have some inquiry into the matter, especially by asking the men themselves, and see if better provision might be made in both these meals. There had been no inquiry into the subject for something like twenty-five years, and even then the witnesses examined were not the men who really suffered, but men serving in harbour ships, who had many opportunities of obtaining for themselves provisions not supplied by the Government. He hoped the First Lord of the Admiralty would see his way to the appointment of a Departmental Committee to inquire into the subject, with instructions not only to examine the matter thoroughly, but to find out the opinions of the blue-jackets themselves, the food given being obviously a very limited allowance.

*CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS (Devonshire, Torquay) supported the appeal of his hon. and gallant friend, and said he was certain that if a Departmental Committee were appointed and evidence taken, not only from the bluejackets and marines serving in the Fleet, but also from specialists in the preparation of articles of diet, it would result in greatly improving the condition of our bluejackets and marines without any greatly increased cost to the nation.

MR. ARTHUR MORTON (Deptford) said that he desired to reduce the Vote by £100 under Subhead B.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) on a point of order asked whether it would not be more convenient to finish the question of victualling the ships before proceeding further.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think perhaps it would be more convenient.

MR. KEARLEY said there was no doubt a great deal of discontent, which could not easily make itself heard owing to the service regulations, with the food served out to the marines and blue-jackets. That was not to be wondered at considering the fact that there had been no alteration in the last twenty-five

years, and that during that time the improvement in the food of the people had been marvellous, and directly anyone joined the Navy he found himself debarred from the food to which he was used. For breakfast, at 6.30 a.m., the man got a pint of tea or cocoa and dry bread or biscuit, with nothing to help it down in the shape of butter or jam. Dinner was at 12 o'clock noon, and supper at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, after which there was nothing in the shape of a meal—unless an optional issue of half a pint of cocoa at the will of the captain—until 6.30 next morning. The hours were as much out of joint as the food arrangements were antiquated. The result of insufficient food was that the men were constantly going to the canteen. Thousands of pounds were spent every year in the canteens. He asked the First Lord of the Treasury if he would grant a Return of the money spent in the canteens of the various ships. He was informed that there was underhand dealing in the management of the canteens, and that the sailor was being exploited and fleeced so that profits might be made for the canteen. And even if that was not so, the canteens could not buy to advantage, in the first place owing to want of knowledge, and, in the next, to having to buy in small quantities. He suggested that the Admiralty itself ought to be as far as possible the wholesale distributors to the canteens.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I am bound to say that notwithstanding the points put forward the physique of the Navy does not show that the food is insufficient. The system of canteens, however, is a matter which has given me much anxiety. The system is connected with that of savings, which is a cherished system with the bluejackets. The bluejackets cling to their system, and if the Admiralty were to touch it they would create the greatest discontent. A Return is asked for as to the amount spent in the canteens. The Return would give quite an insufficient idea unless accompanied by information showing how much of the money spent in the canteens really came from the savings of the men. The savings of the men in lieu of provisions amount to as much as £450,000 a year. There are objections to that system because the men supply themselves with provisions not necessarily the most nutri-

tious, but which are more tasty than other provisions with which they might supply themselves. The hon. Member says that committees are not to be trusted, but I should doubt very much whether it would be wise, as at present advised, to touch the system under which the men themselves manage their canteens. But I can assure the Committee that the canteens have improved in quality very much. Some of the larger contractors have been taking the matter up, and they are now supplying provisions of a better quality and at a better price than was the case before. Of course, any abuses that are discovered ought to be most severely punished, but it is evident that the blame, if any, rests with the men or with the system, and not with the Admiralty, who allow the men in this respect very full liberty. All who know the character of the bluejacket are aware that there is one point which it is very delicate to touch, and that is the question of food and savings. The Committee will see that my attention has been called to this matter, and I need not say that I will give it my best consideration. The hon. Member for Torquay drew attention to the fact that the proportion of bread and meat was unsatisfactory. I am aware of it, and it is a matter for consideration whether the rations should not be considered from the point of view of their relative quantities. It is, however, a matter extremely delicate to touch. The hon. Member asked for a Parliamentary Committee, but I should certainly advise against a Parliamentary Committee to consider the question of food in the Navy. It would be a most dangerous tribunal to deal with the question. I would remind the Committee that at the Admiralty there are a number of captains fresh from sea who help to deal with these questions, and who are familiar with the whole system, and take a great interest in it. Hon. Members must not, therefore, think that these questions are not dealt with until attention is called to them in Parliament. We have them constantly under consideration, but the subject is a very difficult one. I do not wish to promise a Departmental Committee, but I will be very glad to promise that the matter shall be considered by my naval colleagues and myself. As regards the question of hours, it is very difficult to change them from the point of view of altering the working of the ship

There is, I believe, a "stand by" about nine o'clock, when the men provide themselves with a certain amount of food, not out of their own pockets. There is a great deal of latitude given to bluejackets in this matter. I will undertake to discuss it with my more experienced advisers, and I will not hesitate to place any further proposals before the House of Commons if they are found necessary for the health and comfort of the bluejackets.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I will not, of course, oppose my right hon. friend in carrying out any of his kind intentions. He said a great deal about savings, and no naval man questions the statement that savings ought not to be interfered with at all. But we are not in agreement with my right hon. friend that the scale of rations does not require revision. Would it surprise my right hon. friend to know that the Boers get 1½lb. of meat per day, and that is the reason why they fight so well? Of course, savings are a great privilege and advantage to the men, but what we should look to is the main supply of bread and meat. To place our men in good fighting condition 1½lb. of meat per day ought to be the minimum allowed to every bluejacket and marine. I think more might be done to improve the system of rations. Why should not porridge be allowed on the lower deck? It is very easy to carry and very easy to cook, and is very popular with a great many men. The hon. Member for Devonport urged that butter should be carried, but that is not possible except on home stations. There is one ration which we do not supply. We do not supply milk, not even to our boys' training ships. That is very wrong. The boys, by some wonderful economy, get milk at their own cost, but a boy's pay is very small, and there ought not to be any deductions from it. I ask any father if he would like his children to be deprived of milk. I have been asked by a clergyman's lady who takes a great interest in this question to bring it before the Committee. I think also that ships in harbour should be supplied with milk. As to the hours of meals, that is a matter that must be left to the captain of the ship.

MR. KEARLEY: I want one meal given later in the evening.

ADMIRAL FIELD: I quite agree that there should be an extra meal in the

Mr. Goschen

evening. Then as to canteens, they have been a great success. There may be a little scandal here and there, but they are very well managed on the whole by committees of the lower deck, which are supervised by the officers or a committee of officers. The canteens are a great accommodation to the men, and I would urge that some of the necessary articles sold in them should be provided by the Admiralty at cost price. My main points are that milk should be supplied to our boys' training ships, and to all ships in harbour, and porridge should be provided for breakfast, and 1½lbs. of meat per man should be allowed daily.

COMMANDER BETHELL: I am obliged to my right hon. friend for having promised that very close attention will be given to the general question of rations. The men no doubt get enough to eat, partly from the system of savings, although that has to be supplemented by their own money. I think everyone who takes an interest in the Navy ought to be able to take up the official record of what a ship's crew are allowed, and feel that we—the people—are giving them sufficient to eat without having to supplement their food out of their own money. I take this opportunity of asking my right hon. friend whether he will give further consideration to the suggestion that all provisions not issued because of imprisonment or other reasons should be handed over to a benevolent fund connected with the Navy. That would be an advantage.

SIR JOHN BAKER (Portsmouth): I am sure the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty will be received with great satisfaction on the lower deck. I do not think, however, the Committee is aware of the large amount the men pay to supplement their food. It is said that a bluejacket has to pay from 2s. 6d. to 4s. a week to get fresh food. The First Lord has promised to inquire into the matter, and I am sure that aspect of the question will not be overlooked.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I wish to refer to the question of sailors' kits. The kit costs about £12 all told, and I believe it will be found that it contains a number of entirely unnecessary articles, such as cloth trousers, which never look well. A great many of these articles are compulsory; I am speaking

on professional advice ; on the other hand, a number of articles, such as oilskins, are not compulsory. I should think that of all things which a sailor needs on deck oilskins are the most important ; nevertheless they are not compulsory. With regard to the question of the constant worry to which both officers and men are subjected by the absurd regulations regarding exact dimensions, which force officers to walk about with tape measures in their pockets, I would remind the Committee that every man is not subject to the same set of conditions, which makes it impossible to comply with the regulations. The other day a training ship was supplied with thousands of caps furnished by contractors to the Admiralty, which on measurement were found to be one-eighth of an inch too small across the top. The result was that the men had to buy new caps. I hope my right hon. friend does not question the facts, or that if he does he will give me an opportunity of privately informing him of the name of the ship. I can assure him that the men are constantly remedying small differences in their clothing. The Admiralty standard itself is not uniform ; there are two or three different patterns. On Whale Island a man is expected to wear his badge near the top of his shoulder ; when he goes aboard ship it must be worn lower. Only one standard should be kept, or else all standards should coincide with each other, and no departure from the standard should be allowed on the part of officers, or if allowed we must be much less severe with the men. That is the remedy. I would discourage all these tape measurements, which do not add to the smartness of the men, and which worry the officers. I hope the question of the kit will be considered, and also whether such articles as oilskins should not be made compulsory.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) : There is one matter connected with the Vote which I should like to submit to the First Lord of the Admiralty. In the list of appropriations-in-aid, there is an item, "Proportion of contribution made by Australian colonies for appointing and maintaining an additional force in Australian waters, £9,600." This is part of an annuity of £130,000 which the Australian colonies make to the Admiralty for the protection of commerce in Australian waters. It was embodied in the Naval Defence Act of 1888, and

the arrangement was to last for ten years, unless terminated by two years notice. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman if the arrangement has terminated, or if notice to terminate has been given. If the right hon. Gentlemen would prefer to make a statement on some other Vote I will postpone the question.

MR. GOSCHEN : I would prefer that it should be postponed.

MR. MENDEL (Plymouth) : My experience is that the average bluejacket does not complain of being underfed, but there is a great deal of complaint about the want of variety in the rations. It is a case of dry bread or dry biscuits and salt junk, and there is no reason why some variety should not be introduced, such as cheese or jam, which would make it rather less of a regulation diet. That would really be more acceptable than an increase in the amount of meat.

COMMANDER YOUNG (Berkshire, Wokingham) : I am very glad indeed that this question of rations is to be thoroughly gone into. My right hon. friend mentioned that the physique of the Navy was all that could be desired. With that I quite agree, but I believe that a great deal of that physique is kept up out of the men's pockets. I hope that some inquiry will take place, and that the Admiralty will come to the conclusion to give our bluejackets and marines sufficient food, and so avoid taxing the men's pay.

*MR. ARTHUR MORTON : I beg to move the reduction by £100 of the Vote in respect of the payment given to hired labourers in the Royal Victoria Victualling Yard, Deptford. I have had the honour of bringing this question forward on two previous occasions, but without success, though I hope for better fortune now. The matter is really one of simple justice. There are three great Government establishments in the Metropolitan District—the clothing factory at Pimlico, the Woolwich Arsenal, and the Deptford Victualling Yard—at which labourers are employed. These labourers all perform the same duties, and live under the same conditions as regards house-rent and other expenses. In 1897 an increase of 1s. a week was given by the War Office to the labourers in the Pimlico Clothing Factory and at Woolwich Arsenal. In 1898 a similar grant was made by the Admiralty

to the labourers employed by it in the Arsenal at Woolwich, and I trust that on the present occasion the demand for a similar act of justice for the labourers in its employ at the Deptford Victualling Yard may be listened to by the First Lord of the Admiralty. I am not going into the question of whether the wages are sufficient, but I simply ask, as a mere matter of justice, that the labourers in the victualling yard should be paid at the same rate of wages as the labourers in the other two establishments I have mentioned. The First Lord of the Admiralty alluded the other day, in sympathetic terms, to the manner in which these labourers performed the increased duties which fell upon them during the pressure caused by the war, and I feel quite sure that their modest demand for equality with their brethren at Woolwich will be favourably considered.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item B (Wages of Artificers) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Arthur Morton.*)

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.) said that year after year hon. Members brought this case before the Committee. They invariably pointed out that the House many years ago passed a fair wages clause, and since then Governments, no matter what party was in power, invariably pressed their contractors to pay their men the current rate of wages in the locality. But they themselves now fell short of doing that simple act of justice to their own men. One argument with which they had been met was that the men were not in every instance able-bodied workmen or that their labour was of the lowest class. But in this particular case of Deptford there could be no doubt whatever that the men did precisely the same work as stevedores and dockers, for which the latter were paid at the rate of sixpence an hour, or 24s. a week. Some time ago the War Office advanced the wages of the men in their employment at Woolwich, and after a time the Admiralty were driven to give their men at Woolwich the same rate of wages, because the men employed by the two Departments were working side by side. He pleaded with the First Lord of the Admiralty to give the Deptford labourers the same rate of wages as was given to the labourers at Woolwich for doing exactly the same class of work. The

Mr. Arthur Morton.

First Lord last year said that the reason why he did not concede the addition was that the extra shilling would go into the pockets of the sweating landlords of Deptford. That was a strange reason why the right hon. Gentleman should fail to do what was common justice.

MR. GOSCHEN said he did not give it as a reason but stated it as a fact.

CAPTAIN NORTON said he would be glad to know what was the reason then. He failed to see why men working at Woolwich should be paid a higher rate of wages than the men doing exactly the same work at Deptford. On the question of rents he contended that it would be a simple matter to draw up a scale of wages in keeping with the rents of workmen's houses in different dockyards. The demand for labour at Deptford was always fully met, but he would point out that the men who joined at Deptford made a convenience of the yard until they could pass on to private employment where they got a better rate of wages. The country ought to have the *élite* of unskilled, as well as the *élite* of skilled labour. The First Lord of the Admiralty had spoken of the privileges which these men obtained, but it had been pointed out that these privileges could be got for 6d. a week from any benefit society. He would be perfectly satisfied if the First Lord would give the men 24s. a week wages, and retain 6d. a week for the privileges the Government desired to confer on them. These men were said to be unskilled labourers, but he held that they were practically skilled labourers; they were frequently employed, for instance, in cooperage work. He admitted that when they did cooperage work they were paid 2s. 6d. per week extra; but that was only for a few weeks in the year, and it did not bring the men's average wages up to anything like the current rate in the locality. The question of the insufficient food of the sailors had been brought up. The sailors were, nevertheless, fairly well fed; but how could these Deptford labourers, with 19s. a week, out of which they had to pay 9s. or 10s. for rent, and feed their wives and children, also feed themselves well? Yet but for these men the Navy would starve, for they handled all the stores, and did all the packing and embarkation of the stores for the Navy. They had been recently

working might and main and long overtime, and they had not been adequately paid for that overtime, although he believed the right hon. Gentleman was going to make some concessions in regard to the overtime. However, overtime had no bearing on the question of the current rate of wages to which the men were entitled. He trusted that the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment would go to a division.

SIR JOHN BAKER said there were sufficient reasons this year why there should be some concessions in the rate of pay to labourers in the dockyards, because at the present moment labourers were being subjected to at least from 6d. to 1s. per week increased expenditure in consequence of the scheme of taxation put before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He thought the Government ought to show an example to other employers as to the rate of wages they paid. The Admiralty, he maintained, was not justified in employing labourers at less than 20s. per week. Could the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Admiralty give any reason for the Admiralty employing men at 19s. per week? There was no answer to that. There was another fact. In very large towns as the population increased so did the rents increase. In his own constituency there were from 30,000 to 40,000 houses, and the rents of these during the last year or two had been advanced 25 per cent. Surely the Admiralty should give consideration to the necessities of the localities in which these workmen were employed on that account. For many years he had been agitating for a fair rate of wages for those labourers, and he did not see how the right hon. Gentleman could justify a refusal of their just due. If the right hon. Gentleman would concede this, he would give satisfaction to the men and do his duty to the country.

MR. GOSCHEN said that the speech of the hon. Member showed the width of the question now before the Committee. The hon. Members spoke for Portsmouth and Deptford. The hon. Member for Deptford said that, as a mere act of justice, the labourers there should be paid the same wage as the labourers at Woolwich. But that same act of justice did not apply when they came to Portsmouth, for the hon. Gentleman asked that the labourers at Portsmouth, who were paid 1s. per week more than the

labourers at Deptford, should get more. Hon. Gentlemen brought this question up year after year, and would no doubt continue to do so until they found a First Lord of the Admiralty who would consent to their demands. There were only 150 labourers at Deptford, but there were thousands of dockyard labourers elsewhere, and he regretted that he could not consider the case of the men at Deptford except as part of a general scheme. It was quite clear that if he gave way and increased the wages at Deptford they would have to be raised all over the country. The question was, therefore, not a local one. The hon. Member for Newington spoke of the men at Deptford who were doing cooperage and working overtime. For four months in the year the men who did cooperage work received 2s. 6d. a week extra.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Only a very limited number of them.

MR. GOSCHEN said there were only 150 men altogether at Deptford, and therefore the cost of conceding the extra wages would be a small consideration, and he should have been only too anxious to give way if there were not a principle involved. He could not discriminate further in regard to dockyard labourers than had already been done. As to the question of overtime, the men had worked excellently, and had not listened to the suggestion that they should put pressure on the Admiralty by refusing to work. It was proposed to give them an increase of 25 per cent. for the first four hours of overtime, and an increase of 50 per cent. when the overtime extended to eight hours, as a recognition of the excellent way in which they had done their work. He was sorry he could not go further and give way on this question.

SIR JOHN BAKER asked if the right hon. Gentleman was not prepared to give some promise that the minimum rate of wages of labourers should be 20s. a week.

MR. GOSCHEN said he could not give a promise of that kind at this time. The labourers in all the dockyards, and not in one only, would have to be dealt with.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the right hon. Gentleman gave them his annual lecture on taking up the time of the House on this small question. All of them were

sincerely sorry, for they thought that the First Lord of the Admiralty took a wholly false view of his duties in respect of this matter when he believed that he could not raise the wages of the Deptford labourers without undertaking to raise them throughout the country. If the raising of the wages of labour in one place involved the raising of wages throughout the country, the matter might be a very serious one. But surely that was not the case. The War Office had never dealt with the question in that way.

MR. GOSCHEN said the War Office had not so large a number of labourers as the Admiralty had.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that the War Office had not such a large number, but still they had considerable numbers scattered over the country, and neither that Department nor the Post Office dealt with the matter in the way which the First Lord of the Admiralty did. In fact, the Post Office had a certain minimum wage which they were ashamed to go below. The case of the men at Devonport and Deptford was the hardest in the whole field of Government employment. The right hon. Gentleman said that a rise in wages always went to a rising rent, but that argument struck at the root of all rises in wages in any part of the country, and therefore ought not to be accepted. The right hon. Gentleman ought to consider the general cost of living in different places as an element in fixing the rate of wages. Some hon. Members objected to anything like uniformity of wages throughout the country, but that principle was not accepted by the Government itself in other Departments. Each case should be considered on its own merits, and the Government set a very ill example in regard to the remuneration of their labours to their own contractors. Although they greatly regretted to appear in any way to hold up to public odium the First Lord of the Admiralty in regard to this question, hon. Members not connected with the dockyard constituencies were in duty bound to show by their votes that on the merits an overwhelming case had been made out for conceding the rise in labourers' wages at Devonport and Deptford.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said that in discussing this matter it was not a question of attacking

Sir Charles Dilke.

the First Lord of the Admiralty personally, far from it; it was a matter of principle. He did not blame the hon. Member for Portsmouth for getting up and speaking in favour of the labourers at Portsmouth Dockyard. In his opinion there was room for improvement in the wages, not only at Portsmouth and Deptford, but in every other part of the United Kingdom. He was one of those who recognised that the competition going on in the present day was detrimental to the interest of the workers of the country. He believed not only in municipalising, but in nationalising all labour, in order that workmen should not suffer from men competing against them, and that the State, which was a non-competitive body, should be the only employer. He had no sympathy with agitation to induce men in Government employ to take advantage of present difficulties, but he strongly urged that 20s. a week was not a wage which in London would enable a workman to bring up a family decently, though, driven by dire necessity and keen competition in the labour market, men might be found to accept it. If the right hon. Gentleman thought it was, let him try it himself. In the East-end of London they were poor enough, yet they paid their road-sweepers 25s. He felt quite sure that but for the restraint of party allegiance many Members opposite would support the Amendment as a conscientious protest against what was little better than a starvation rate of payment.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said no Member would desire the Government to pay an exorbitant rate of wages, but when the House of Commons declared by resolution that Government contractors should pay the local current rate, certainly it was implied that the Government itself was equally bound by that resolution, and successive Administrations had accepted that principle. When contractors near Deptford were carrying out a Government contract they would not say before such an arbitrator as the head of the Labour Department of the Board of Trade that 20s. a week was the current rate for unskilled labour. At the time of the great dock strike it was settled that the minimum rate should be 6d. an hour, and that indicated an answer to the question of the First Lord, What is the current rate? It was sometimes urged that certain privi-

leges attached to Government employment, but the highest estimate of their value did not exceed 1s. 6d. weekly. When the Government paid 20s. a week at Deptford they were not paying the current rate. If the Government raised the rate in London, that by no means committed them to payment of the same rate elsewhere, because local circumstances must determine the question locally.

MR. TRITTON (Lambeth, Norwood) appealed to the First Lord of the Admiralty to reconsider this matter. When the matter was brought forward in the previous year he voted for the motion, and he believed that if the First Lord could show a little generosity in this matter he would never have cause to regret it. It would give great satisfaction to many supporters of the Government, if they would give generous treatment to men who were considered to be underpaid.

MR. GOSCHEN regretted the speeches he had listened to had not encouraged him to make the concession asked for. They had rather influenced him in the opposite direction. They had shown him the danger of embarking on the course which the Admiralty was invited to take. This was a test case, and every speech which had been made showed how the same arguments would be used in countless other cases. The question could not be limited to the wages of labourers at Deptford. It must go beyond that. It was not a question of the rate of the wages at Deptford, but the wages of labourers in naval dockyards throughout the kingdom. The Treasury had not interfered and had nothing to do with the matter. The principle on which he had acted was his own. It was a principle for which he, personally, was responsible, and he felt strongly (he hoped the phrase would not be offensive) being coerced by the House of Commons into granting higher wages than, according to the principles he entertained, he thought should be granted. He could not make this concession consistently with the principles he held. He confessed that it was a misfortune. Perhaps he was old-fashioned in these matters, and could not adjust himself to the doctrines which had permeated so many of the speeches he had just listened to. On a question of such magnitude in his eyes he could not give way, much as he regretted it.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the area of discussion had been unfortunately enlarged by what the First Lord of the Admiralty had just said. The question was merely one of dockyard labourers' wages at Deptford. Nearly ten years had elapsed since the present rate of wages was fixed by the Board of Admiralty. Since then many things had happened. In fixing the rate of wages they adopted the principle of local discrimination. A shilling extra was allowed at Deptford, because rents were higher there than in other dockyard towns. If it was true that in consequence of the allowance rents had been raised in Deptford and the landlords had benefited, that was a serious matter, but such a contention would have to be proved, and the right hon. Gentleman could not have committed himself to that statement without inquiry. It was never intended that they should reap the benefit, and it was only fair that the inquiry made nearly ten years ago into the conditions of labour should be renewed.

*MR. ARTHUR MORTON said it was a matter of very great regret to him to find himself in opposition to the First Lord of the Admiralty, but this was a claim founded on justice, and he felt bound to press it. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman on behalf of the labourers of the Deptford Victualling Yard for the reference he made to the work they had performed during the late crisis. The demand was a very small one. He was deeply convinced that it was a simple act of justice to give these men the same rate of wages as was given to labourers of that class performing the same kind of work in other Government establishments. He trusted that, even at the eleventh hour, the First Lord of the Admiralty would see his way to consider the matter favourably. As the labourers in two other establishments receive 1s. a week more for performing precisely the same duties, he could not see why the same wages should not be given at Deptford.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport) observed that the question, though small, and affecting only a single dockyard, involved a principle to which, as one of the Members for Devonport, he would certainly object—namely, that there should be a varying rate of wages to the same class of workmen in different places. He held that there should be a minimum

rate of wage for the labourers throughout the Government employment. The First Lord of the Admiralty, in a speech the logic of which he could not understand, seemed to think otherwise. There had been two debates in the present Parliament on this question. One was two and a half years ago, when the question of the minimum wage paid to the labourers for the War Office was discussed. In the course of the debate on that occasion, he pointed out that they most cordially accepted and insisted upon the principle that they should pay certain labourers in certain dockyards higher wages than in another. He understood then that they got from the Government a promise that they would institute an inquiry into all the circumstances of dockyard labour, and that they should once for all settle what was the equivalent wage representing the same amount of work in all those different places where labourers were employed by the Government. As a matter of fact, nothing had been done, and no change had taken place. In the debate to which he referred, the hon. Member the Financial Secretary to the War Office stated that he had inquired into the conditions of the Government employment at Pimlico, particularly, and had come to the conclusion that 19s. 6d. was not a sufficient minimum wage to give to Government employees in London, and he undertook that he would raise the rate with, as he thought, advantage to the Government employment. The hon. Member had said that night that he would raise the minimum wage to 21s. per week, and considering the other advantages of the Government employment, that might be regarded as equivalent to 22s. per week. The War Office two and a half years ago raised the wages of the employees 2s. 6d., but the Admiralty had done nothing. He did not see why the Admiralty should treat their labourers worse than the War Office treated theirs. He could not understand why it was that the Government should not consent to make a general inquiry once for all, and ascertain the difference as between the purchasing power of wages in one constituency as compared with another. He wished to see the Admiralty follow the example of the War Office with regard to the other principle, and say that no man in Government employment should receive less than £1 per week in wages.

Mr. E. J. C. Morton.

MR. GRAY (West Ham, N.) observed that he understood the First Lord of the Admiralty to say that he could not consent to go into this question because he felt he could not be coerced by the House of Commons. Well, that being the case, what on earth was the good of bringing this before the House at all? Mr. Gray had not formed his opinion in this case from anything he had heard outside—in fact, no representation whatever had been made to him outside the House. He had listened to the debates on this question year after year, and having regard to the cost of living in London he thought those men ought to be dealt with in the manner suggested.

MR. KEARLEY said the First Lord of the Admiralty had taken up the position that he could not give way because there must be uniformity of wages. The question was whether the wage paid at Deptford was inadequate. He was sorry to hear the right hon. Gentleman take exception to the interference of Parliament in this matter. He had been long enough in the House to hear Ministers representing not this Government alone, but the Government that preceded it, standing up and declaring that 15s. a week was an ample wage to a labourer. Although it was distasteful to have to discuss questions of this kind in that House there was no other method open to them, and he was perfectly certain whatever concession was ever made to any of those employees it was initiated and brought about by the pressure brought to bear by Members of Parliament. He hoped that so far as Deptford was concerned the right hon. Gentleman would take up a different attitude and concede what was asked.

MR. GOSCHEN replied that an hon. Member had stated that such questions need not be brought before Parliament if he refused to be coerced. He thought the object of bringing Votes before the House was that the House might have an opportunity of checking expenditure. He should always bow to the decision of the House in the direction of a reduction of expenditure, but personally he should not always bow to the behests of the House in the matter of raising expenditure. The moment the Government conceded that point the expenditure would rise by leaps and bounds. He would make one his-

torical remark. When he was First Lord of the Admiralty before, he raised the wages of certain trades at an expense of £70,000, and that was done looking to the whole attitude of labour in general. That would show at all events that when he was convinced that it was right to raise the rate of wages he was ready to do so. He could not give way on the present occasion, but he would take the whole question of labour into consideration and he would look at the wages of labourers in the dockyards. He would examine the question afresh with such assistance as he could get, but knowing the great interest many Members took in this matter he regretted all the more that this particular demand of Deptford should have been raised.

*MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said the right hon. Gentleman seemed to hold the view that cheap labour meant cheap production, but that was an economic fallacy, as could be proved upon investigation. Until the Government broke through their present rule, and paid the current rate of wages which could be obtained from other employers on similar work, they would always have these discussions on the Navy Estimates. He urged the Government to conform to the practice of nearly every other authority in the country. He sincerely trusted the right hon. Gentleman would not try to balance himself on the question whether house rent at Deptford, Pimlico, or Devonport took the larger portion of the wages. They had nothing to do with pettifogging questions of that kind. They had got to pay the current rate of wages and let the labourer get his house as cheaply as he could. The right hon. Gentleman said the object of the Estimates should be to check the expenditure of the country. The hon. Member was perfectly convinced of this, that if they paid the men at Deptford 19s. or 20s. a week they were only getting as compared with other employers 16s. or 17s. worth of labour. He believed that low wages meant dear labour in the long run. The skilled labour which the Admiralty employed was organised, and the skilled workers extracted from the Government the trades union rate of wages, but in the case of unskilled labour the men were too poor to join a trades union. He ventured to say that in Deptford a labourer earning 19s. or 20s. a week could

not afford 3d. or 4d. a week to a trades union, besides 7d. or 8d. to a friendly society. The right hon. Gentleman adhered to the view that the House of Commons ought not to interfere with the wages of Departments. He disputed that doctrine *in toto*, although the minimum of interference was only possible when Government paid the current rate and secured the highest quality of labour. The men employed in the dockyards could not take that effective combination which men outside the Government service could take. He held that the Government should not exploit the helplessness of these men by denying to them the current rate of wages which other employers paid. There was only one way out of the difficulty, and that was to follow the example of the School Board, the County Council, and the Science and Art Department, and pay the current rate of wages. He believed if they paid 3s. or 4s. a week more at Deptford and Pimlico, inefficient and redundant workpeople would be sent about their business and only efficient men would be employed, capable of turning out a proper amount of work. So long as they had charity wages they were sure to have charity work.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): I find myself in a somewhat difficult position, because this happens to be one of the few questions in regard to which I gave a specific promise to my constituents at the time of my election. I refused to give the assurance they requested—to ask that the wages should be raised to a particular figure—but I promised always to urge the Government to act in the manner of a good employer; in other words, that they would not sweat their labour. I have the greatest sympathy with the remarks of the First Lord of the Admiralty about the impropriety of constituents threatening Members, and Members threatening the Government. If such a chain of coercion was set up the public service might easily suffer. At the same time it is essential that we should act up to our election pledges—not because we might suffer if we did otherwise, but because the credit of public life would suffer. The question really is—are the Government acting as model employers? I should like the right hon. Gentleman to give an assurance that he personally is convinced that a good employer would

not act in a way different from that of the Government towards their labourers. It is quite impossible for us to go into all the details of the rates of wages, comparing the circumstances of one class of labour with those of another, and so on. That might be done by a small Committee of inquiry, or by the Government itself, but it is quite impossible that we should regulate our votes in this House by what is said in debate upon these topics. Therefore, I should be prepared to support the Government and to maintain to my constituents that I have redeemed my pledge, if the First Lord will assure me that the Government, as benevolent and

honest men, are acting in the same spirit as a considerate employer would act towards his labourers.

MR. GOSCHEN: I do not think a good employer with, say 500 men, would give special privileges to twenty or thirty of them. He would look at the whole number, and that is what I am doing. I am acting as I think I should act in a private capacity. I do not acknowledge the justice of a claim put forward on behalf of this particular small body.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 75; Noes, 139. (Division List No. 61.)

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Ambrose, Robert
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Billson, Alfred
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Channing, Francis Alston
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, Arthur
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duckworth, James

Fenwick, Charles
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Jameson, Major J. Enstace
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir W. Cumberland
Lough, Thomas
Lowles, John
Macaleese, Daniel
McCrae, George
McDermott, Patrick
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
Maddison, Fred
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Palmer, Geo. Wm. (Reading)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancashire)
Power, Patrick Joseph

Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbigh)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Seton-Karr, Henry
Steadman, William Charles
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Trevelyan, Charles Philip
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, H. J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, Jos. H. (Middlesbrough)
Woods, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Arthur Morton and
Captain Norton.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manchester)
Banbury, Frederic George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Bethell, Commander
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, T. G. (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birmingham)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worcester)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer

Clare, Octavius Leigh
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. R. (Hereford)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Denny, Colonel
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Flower, Ernest
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Gibbs, Hon. V. (St. Albans)

Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Sir Augustus Fred.
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. George's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Green, W. D. (Wendesbury)
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Edw. B. (Hampstead)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry

Lord Hugh Cecil.

Knowles, Lees
 Lafone, Alfred
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
 Lea, Sir Thos. (Londonderry)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. W. E. H.
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Sw'ns'a)
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Liverpool)
 Lonsdale, John Brownlee
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 M'Killop, James
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milner, Sir Frederick George
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Monk, Charles James
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 More, Robert J. (Shropshire)

Morrell, George Herbert
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
 Myers, William Henry
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Phillipots, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plunkett, Rt. Hn. Horace Curzon
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
 Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, Sir Thos. (Hartlep'l)
 Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Sidebottom, T. Harrop (Stlybr.)

Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Ox. Univ.)
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, W. Edw. Murray
 Wauklyn, James Leslie
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
 Williams, Joseph Powell (Birm)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Yerburch, Robert Armstrong
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOIS—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. £208,800, Medical Establishments and Services.

COMMANDER BETHELL: In the course of the last year or two there has been a very strong suspicion that the naval hospital is not all that could be desired. While I have no concrete cases to bring before the Committee, I should be very grateful if the Civil Lord could tell me whether the system of nursing at the naval hospital has been thoroughly gone into, and whether the more modern system which is established in civil hospitals has been adopted.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I can give the hon. and gallant Member a reply which I think will be satisfactory to him. I do think the system of nursing in the naval hospital left very much to be desired. The class of men whom we have recruited for the sick berth staff has not been up to the proper standard. Lately a Committee of the Admiralty has investigated the condition of the sick berth staff and the conditions for the employment of nursing sisters, and has made certain recommendations which are now being carried out. I hope one result will be that we shall have a better class of men and better trained men than we have hitherto had. It is a matter to which the Board of Admiralty and the medical directors have given a great deal of attention recently, and we shall watch the result of changes with very great interest.

DR. TANNER (Cork County, Mid): After the many recommendations which have been made by various Committees upstairs on the Naval Estimates, we find ourselves at the opening of another century with the work, then promised to be carried out, still undone. The number of duly qualified medical men going up as candidates for positions in connection with the naval medical service is incomparable with the number of vacancies which occur. At the last Committee on Naval Estimates I had the support not only of the noble Lord who was recently Member for York, but also of the then head of the Naval Medical Department, in the view, which was given as a recommendation of the Committee, that the same facilities should be offered in this country as are offered in other countries, in order that medical men who have been afloat for a period of years may on their return be able to study their profession for a month or six weeks, so that they may make up any points upon which they have fallen short of the advancement in the science they practise. The granting of such facilities would be to the advantage not only of the men themselves, but also of the patients of whom they have charge.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Will the hon. Member allow me to interrupt for one moment? I do not know whether he has read the Report of a Committee of the Admiralty on this matter which has been circulated as a Parliamentary Paper. That Committee recommended that increased facilities should be

given to officers returning from abroad to take a post-graduate course of study here on full pay. That recommendation has been approved by the Board of Admiralty and sanctioned by the Treasury.

DR. TANNER: Had I read that Report I would not have troubled the Committee with these remarks. I sincerely hope, for the benefit of all concerned, that the recommendation will be carried into effect as speedily as possible.

Resolution agreed to.

3. £13,300, Martial Law, etc.

4. £92,300, Educational Services.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I desire to move a reduction of £100 in respect of Subhead "D" (Allowances to chaplains as naval instructors).

*THE CHAIRMAN: The question of Roman Catholic chaplains in the Navy—I do not know whether that is the point to which the hon. Member desires to allude—could not be raised upon this Vote, which refers only to the educational services rendered.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: It may be that this matter cannot be raised until we reach Vote 12; but I have only a few words to say, and it may facilitate matters if I am allowed to proceed. It is with respect to the allowance to chaplains as naval instructors that I raise my objection. Am I not in order in referring on this Vote to the fact that of the considerable sum of money set down under this head none goes to chaplains of the Catholic religion? This Vote illustrates the fact that the Navy is practically without Catholic chaplains.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That point does not arise here. If the hon. Member wishes to contend that a certain number of Roman Catholics ought to be employed as naval instructors he will be in order. If he wishes to contend that a certain number of Roman Catholics should be appointed as chaplains in the navy—that does not arise under this Vote.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I quite understand that technically I am out of order, but I raise the objection—and I think it meets the case—that not one penny of this money goes to a Catholic

M: Austen Chamberlain.

chaplain, for the simple reason that there are no Catholic chaplains in the Fleet. I object to this Vote because it goes exclusively to chaplains of the Church of England. At any rate a portion of the money ought to go to chaplains of our church. In certain cases Catholic chaplains accompany the Fleet, and in those cases should they not be entitled to a share of this money? I should like to read an Admiralty minute dealing with this question, and to ask the First Lord whether it cannot be carried out. If so, I should be, to a great extent, satisfied on this point. The minute, which is dated June 7th, 1878, says—

"My Lords direct that when a large number of ships forming a squadron are sent on any service that would keep them for a considerable time away from a port where the services of a Roman Catholic priest would be available, arrangements are to be made for one to accompany the squadron."

*THE CHAIRMAN: That really does not arise on this Vote, which is purely educational. If the hon. Member will turn to Vote 11 I think he will there find a point upon which he can raise this question.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I have no particular desire to pursue the matter now. If I do not get a reply I will raise the matter later on, but I think it would be more convenient if the First Lord would say now that the spirit of that minute will be carried out.

MR. GOSCHEN: I can assure the hon. Member that we have endeavoured to carry out the spirit of that minute. When our ships went to Crete special arrangements were made under that particular clause, and the Commander-in-Chief was directed to carry out, as far as possible, the spirit of that resolution. We are anxious, without putting any of these gentlemen on the ships, that the spiritual necessities of Roman Catholics should not be neglected, and those services were performed in the case of the squadron which went to Crete.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE: It must not be imagined for one moment that we are satisfied with the present educational facilities. We have thousands of Roman Catholic soldiers and sailors, and their susceptibilities in matters of religion and education have to be considered. I have frequently conversed upon this subject,

and it is not a mere question of what Catholics in Ireland think, but Catholics in this country are dissatisfied with the position of this question. The hon. Member for East Clare is to be commended for the firm and uncompromising manner in which he has brought this question forward, and pressed it upon the attention of the Admiralty.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: There is a question which was raised last year with regard to the teaching of modern languages. The First Lord promised to do what he could to improve it. At the time of the Crete affair it was found we were very short of naval officers who could speak modern languages. The amount taken for the purpose under this Vote is very small, but I doubt whether even that amount is entirely spent.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (MR. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.) made a reply which was inaudible in the Press Gallery.

DR. TANNER: Under Sub-head G—expenses connected with candidates for the naval medical services—the examination of candidates appears to cost the same amount year after year no matter what the number of candidates may be. There is a note here that the probable number of candidates to be examined during the year 1901 is 100. The Admiralty have been out in their numbers so very frequently that I should like to know upon what foundation they base this estimate.

MR. MACARTNEY: Those figures are based upon past experience. Sometimes they may be absolutely correct, sometimes they are not.

DR. TANNER: In what year has the number been accurate or nearly accurate?

MR. MACARTNEY: If the hon. Gentleman will give me time to look up the records I will tell him. There may be a difference of one or two, but they have been practically accurate. I have no reason to suppose that the figures for the present year ought to be altered. If more money is spent it has to be made up in some other way—either out of the Vote or out of Naval Votes generally, but I believe sufficient money is provided.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): On various pages of these Estimates I find

sums set down as allowances to chaplains as naval instructors. I want to know whether any of the gentlemen receiving these allowances are ministers of the Church of Scotland, or whether they are clergy of the Church of England exclusively. The Church of Scotland is not a dissenting body, and her ministers are as much entitled to participate in these benefits as the clergy of the Church of England.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Of course, the gentlemen who are chaplains and receiving these allowances for naval instruction as such are clergymen of the Church of England. As to the naval instructors who are not chaplains, we have no knowledge whatever of their religious views. No inquiry is made, and, whatever their religious views, they would not be a bar to their appointment.

*MR. WEIR: Can the hon. Gentleman tell me whether there are any Presbyterian ministers appointed as naval instructors?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, there are not.

*MR. WEIR: May I ask the Admiralty to consider whether Presbyterian ministers and ministers of the Church of Scotland are not entitled to share in these advantages?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot hold out any expectation or make any promise such as is asked by the hon. Member.

*MR. WEIR: I find a sum in this Vote allowed to chaplains for acting as naval instructors. These chaplains are all Church of England clergymen, and I think that Presbyterian ministers might also be engaged for some of this work. All wisdom is not centred in the Church of England, and many ministers in the Presbyterian Church are men of great ability, who would be quite competent to act as naval instructors. I hope the hon. Gentleman will see his way to give the Committee some information on the subject, and also that something will be done in the way of appointing Presbyterian ministers to these positions.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: A certain number of chaplains in the Navy are appointed as naval instructors, and

they do that work as well as their ordinary duties as chaplains, and receive an extra allowance. Of course, these chaplains are necessarily clergymen of the Established Church. There are also a number of laymen who act as naval instructors, and there is no test for them except an educational test. As regards the needs of Presbyterians in the Navy, these are met under another Vote by the payment of allowances to Presbyterian ministers, but as regards naval instructorships I do not think we should introduce a religious test as regards the majority of these appointments.

*MR. WEIR: What is the nature of the instruction imparted by these chaplains?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It is entirely lay instruction, such as higher mathematics.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid): In connection with this Vote, it seems to me peculiar that we should have schools in connection with the Navy alone. Why should we have these schools apart from other schools in the different towns, and why are not these children allowed to mix with other children instead of being kept apart? I also observe that the salaries paid to the teachers in these schools are exceedingly small. I am asking for information in the interests of the education of the children. I submit they would be better educated in the ordinary schools, where they would mix with the children of the general community. But if they are to have separate schools there ought to be efficient teachers. These children are entitled to the same amount of education as other children.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: As regards these schools, the subject was very carefully considered a few years ago, and the result of that careful inquiry was to show that there was good reason for continuing these schools. The schools are now under the inspection of the Education Department, which is a sufficient guarantee for their educational standard, and I fancy that even the localities themselves would very strongly object to these children being educated at the board schools at the expense of the ratepayers.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I am not at all surprised at this question being brought forward, because this question and various other questions connected with these schools arose during the time that Lord Spencer, my hon. friend the Member for Dundee, and myself were at the Admiralty. Two Departmental Committees which had the advantage of the services of a very experienced man—Sir Joshua Fitch—inquired into this question of dockyard schools and schools for the children of marines. I confess when I first approached the subject I had some doubt, although a perfectly open mind, whether it was desirable to maintain these schools apart from the ordinary technical or elementary schools, and that a separate education should be given to the children of the dockyard artisans and to the children of marines, but the result of the inquiry was extremely encouraging, and we were convinced that it was desirable to maintain these separate schools. The Departmental Committee recommended that it was desirable to put the Marine Barrack Schools under the Education Department, and now they earn grants from that Department in the same way as ordinary schools. The whole result of that inquiry was to the effect that the educational work done in the dockyard and marine schools was admirable. There were no doubt some suggestions for improvement which were adopted, and I think the Committee may have every confidence that that part of the work of the Admiralty is most efficiently and usefully done. I think that the reason why it was so extremely well done in the past was owing to the careful attention which had been given to the schools by the then Chaplain of the Fleet, the Rev. Cox Edwards. I hope similar attention to it will be shown by his successor. I am very glad my hon. friend has raised the question, and every security should be taken to ensure that these schools are kept up to a high level.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I can confirm what the hon. Gentleman has just said. The schools continue to earn very high grants and to receive very favourable reports from the Education Department.

MR. CALDWELL: The statements we have just heard are very satisfactory, but

it does seem to me that the salaries are very low. For instance, the head mistress of a school commences at £54, and after three years is entitled to £60. It seems to me that the money we pay the teachers in salaries is very inadequate.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): There is one point connected with this Vote to which I would wish to direct the attention of the Admiralty. At present candidates for the Navy are taken up to fifteen and a half years, and for the Marine Artillery and Infantry the minimum age was sixteen years. The naval candidates go through a certain course up to the time they are about twenty-one. At that age, they are sorted out; some are taken for gunnery, some for torpedo work, and others for navigating. I would put it to my right hon. friend whether it is not worth consideration that all officers, whether for marines or for the Navy, should be taken at the same age, and up to the age of twenty-one should go through the same course of training, and then be sorted out, not only for torpedo work, gunnery, and navigation, but also that any officers who showed qualifications for such positions should be attached to the military or marine branch of the Navy. At present we are keeping up an artificial and expensive system, which produces two distinct branches of officers. I cannot see why all officers should not go through the same course of training up to about twenty-one years of age. The whole tendency of the time is for naval officers to become more and more employed on shore, and I think if the matter were considered it would lead to greater economy, heartier co-operation and greater efficiency.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The hon. and gallant Gentleman is quite right as regards age, but as regards training, there are, for instance, watches to be kept.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: My proposition is that all officers entered for the naval and marine services should work on the same lines up to about twenty years of age.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that after all a naval officer had to handle a ship, and a marine officer had not. But he rose to discuss two points. It seemed to him that the whole scheme of naval education demanded attention. One

thing in which naval officers were extraordinarily deficient was modern languages. The right hon. Gentleman had exaggerated the importance of the ancient languages, and too much time was devoted to Latin. That was a public school view; but the result was that modern languages were neglected in favour of Latin and cuneiform inscriptions or Assyrian. How many naval officers held interpreterships? He questioned whether there were half a dozen in the whole Navy. Only two men went up for the last examination for an interpretership, and only one had passed. Scarcely any naval officer knew any modern language, except Swahili; very few spoke French or German or Spanish. [Mr. GOSCHEN dissented.] The First Lord of the Admiralty might speak all of them; but few naval officers could speak any one of them. When a British naval officer had to read a German manifest or a German bill-of-lading he was entirely at sea; and extraordinary deceits were practised upon him. He was informed on very good testimony that the only remedy for this state of affairs in a ship off the coast of South Africa was to send out a special officer from England who knew German. The reason for the short supply of interpreters in the Navy was that they were short of the officers of that particular age who would equip themselves for the post. He saw there were three examiners in various modern languages put down in the Estimates for the Naval College; one French, one German, and another Spanish or Italian. Would the right hon. Gentleman undertake to find him half a dozen officers who could speak accurately any of these languages?

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that if he did find them these officers had probably been stationed off the coast of Spain or Italy, and had taught themselves. It would scarcely be believed that the Admiralty undertook to teach French in fourteen lessons.

MR. GOSCHEN: No.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said it was fourteen when he made his last inquiry; perhaps it had got up to fifteen by this time.

MR. GOSCHEN: It was fourteen when you made your last mistake about it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said his information was from the Chief Instructor on board the "Britannia," and when he last heard from that gentleman it was only fourteen. He hoped there might be more now, for that number was certainly not enough. His contention was that too much time and too many marks were given to Latin, and not enough time or marks to modern languages. Then, he did not see in the list of professors in the college any mention of a professor of the law of nations. Now, it was essential that naval officers should have a general idea of the law of nations. He believed there had been lectures on the law of nations, but he saw no provision made for them in the present Estimates, and he thought that such lectures should be given, especially at Greenwich.

*ADMIRAL FIELD said his hon. friend was a very clever man, but a most incorrigible offender in putting forward arguments which had been answered over and over again. He hoped the First Lord of the Admiralty would not listen to the evil counsel of his hon. friend in discountenancing the teaching of Latin. Nobody could pretend to study French, Italian, or Spanish without having some knowledge of Latin. His hon. friend said that the Admiralty had no lecturer at Greenwich on international law. If that were so, it was a gross sin against custom and rule. He himself had listened to, and profited by the lectures on international law from the late learned Professor Bernard. He did not think his hon. friend sincerely held the views he put forth, but did it more to plague the First Lord of the Admiralty. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Great Yarmouth almost captured him as a supporter of the idea that those who had to live together should be educated together in their youth. But naval cadets entered the "Britannia" at fifteen and a half years, and marine cadets up to the age of eighteen, and he did not think the scheme would work well. Besides, there were other objections and difficulties; for instance, as regards pay. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had said that half-a-dozen naval officers could not be

found who spoke French or German. It would not be Parliamentary to make bets; but he would wager that he could go on board any of Her Majesty's ships and find many officers who spoke French with facility, and many also who spoke German. Why, a marine officer, who had a faculty for languages, went to Russia to study Russian, and afterwards through his personal intervention got the £150 allowance for passing in that language, and he was now in the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty. And yet his hon. friend had the charming audacity to say that the Admiralty did nothing to encourage the study of modern languages.

*CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS said there was considerable facility for educating officers in modern languages, and when they got on shore they could make their wants known, and, what was more, they could get what they wanted. He held that it was by no means necessary for naval officers to understand Latin, and that they could pick up modern languages without a knowledge of that dead language. But he held still more firmly that for anyone who was going to follow the sea as a profession it was absolutely necessary that he should be thoroughly conversant with mathematics. He would go further and say that it would be all the better if a boy who was going to enter the Navy should begin his study of mathematics as soon as he was weaned. He would then be able to reduce everything to a mathematical basis. After three and a half years' trial very few boys from the generally accepted public schools had passed into the "Britannia." This matter required further consideration on the part of the Admiralty, and he hoped that his right hon. friend the First Lord would see whether something could not be done to attract the class of boys most desirable for the public service.

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said he had had great apprehension as to what the result would be of the changes made in recent years, and whether in the end we could obtain a better class of candidates for the "Britannia" by raising the age. He tried to keep an open mind on the subject, as the right hon. the First Lord had also pledged himself to keep an open mind, so that, if it were proved that the

results of raising the age were not such as had been hoped, a change would be made. He would like the right hon. Gentleman to give the Committee some information as to how the last change had worked, and what proportion of the candidates for the "Britannia" came from the public schools, and whether a decreased or an increased proportion of candidates for naval cadetships passed through the hands of crammers. He was quite sure that the desire of the House was that they should adopt as far as possible a wide source of supply for naval officers, and that they should obtain the best from the various public schools, and so save little boys from that process of exceptional preparation by cram, which they knew had not been productive of good results. He would also ask when it was expected that the new system of a college on shore would be in working order. He himself viewed that reform with very great hopes. He gathered, from something which fell from the right hon. Gentleman in introducing the Navy Estimates, that he looked forward to the time when the present term of education in the "Britannia" would be replaced by a longer term. He knew the right hon. Gentleman was as much in earnest as anyone in the endeavour to combat the system of cram; but he was afraid the tendency had been rather to increase cramming during the time the cadets spent on board the "Britannia."

MR. GOSCHEN said he hoped that the Naval College on shore would be in working order in about two years. In reference to the disputed question of Latin, he himself did not object to the boys being taught Latin. He quite disagreed with his hon. friend the Member for Torquay that the boys who had been reared on mathematics from their very earliest infancy were very likely to turn out the best naval officers. The knowledge of mathematics was most important, but it could be acquired by boys at a rather later age. He did insist, and had always insisted, that boys coming into the "Britannia" ought to have a general education. They ought to agree upon that. They might not agree as to the precise proportions, but they should agree that it was necessary to have boys of average cultivation and general knowledge. How best to get them was a difficult question. The Commissioners had tried

over and over again to decide what was the right examination paper for them; but notwithstanding all changes in the marking of papers, the crammers somehow "got round" the Commissioners, and with the connivance of the parents, who were the great sinners, succeeded in passing in more boys than he should wish. He would rather that parents took their chance and did not send their boys to crammers. It was a very difficult matter with which to deal. He wished to impress upon parents that only one boy out of three got in, and if there were two failures, and if these failures had been with crammers, they had lost a certain amount of their time in specialisation at the crammer's. His whole anxiety was to have such papers set as would enable the average boy to get in. As to Latin, Latin was, after all, the foundation of modern languages. By knowing Latin he himself had found it easier to learn Spanish. It would be the same with Italian and French. A knowledge of Latin was the best foundation, too, for grammar and style, and it was most important that naval officers should be able to write despatches and have a general cultivation. Therefore he could not hold out any hope of abolishing the Latin paper.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I did not in the least suggest that the Latin paper should be suppressed, but I think it has too much importance attached to it as compared with the other languages.

MR. GOSCHEN: You would give more attention to the daughter languages than to the mother. We give more attention to the mother of languages than to the daughters.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I prefer the daughters.

MR. GOSCHEN said that the hon. Member was mistaken in supposing that so few officers had a colloquial knowledge of French. There were comparatively few, perhaps, who had a perfect knowledge of the language, but there were many who could read the French newspapers, in which excellent professional papers appeared; and he was anxious for every naval officer to read of everything that went on in France. As to other languages progress was being made, but was there

ever a boy who learnt French thoroughly at any school in the United Kingdom? As to the shorter term on the "Britannia," boys were now better prepared before they entered, and had already learned what used to be part of the course. As to whether candidates presented themselves in sufficient numbers, the number during the last year had been double that of two years ago, and while there were 180 vacancies each year, the number of candidates for them was 540. With reference to what his hon. and gallant friend (Sir J. Colomb) had said as to the training of boys for the Navy and for the Marines, he was afraid it could not be brought about without a revolution of the entire system. It would be extremely awkward if at the end of the term all the lads wanted to be naval officers, or *vice versa*.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB said that would present no more difficulty than was found now when they wanted to be gunnery torpedo or navigating officers.

MR. GOSCHEN said he suspected his hon. and gallant friend had some deep scheme in favour of the Marines. He could hold out no hope that such a scheme as his hon. and gallant friend's could be adopted. There were lectures on international law given at Greenwich, a special course paid for by fees. The subject was worthy of consideration with a view to further facilities being given for these lectures.

*CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS said he believed a certain amount of Latin was a very good thing, but he did not think it should be made an important part of the examination for the Navy. That so many successful candidates came from the crammers, and other than the great public schools, was owing to the vicious system of competition for which his right hon. friend was not responsible. He wished it were possible to go back to the old system of nomination and a high standard of qualification. He could only hope that the system that had been inaugurated by the right hon. Gentleman would be a success.

DR. TANNER said it was seldom he was able to give the right hon. Gentleman his blessing, but on the present occasion he thought what had been said

Mr. Goschen.

by the First Lord of the Admiralty had been absolutely practical. With reference to what the hon. Member who had just spoken said about the public schools, he would ask whether, if they took their minds back to the days when they were attending the public schools, they remembered how little of foreign languages they learned. As to the instruction of naval officers afloat in modern times, he took that to be a very important point, and he would put it to the more practical gentlemen who happened to be Members of the House, and who had served with the Fleet in foreign waters, that there an opportunity came in for the study of languages in the places where they were spoken. The instruction of naval officers afloat in modern languages was one portion of the scheme, and the instruction on shore was another, and he agreed entirely with the First Lord of the Admiralty. In addition to that they had heard a great deal about the marines in modern days. He wanted to know how it came to pass that there had been a reduction in the money paid for instruction in riding.

MR. MACARTNEY: There was a smaller number of officers in attendance.

Resolution agreed to.

5. £66,900, Scientific Services.

*ADMIRAL FIELD regretted that the Committee had to vote over £14,000 for the Hydrographer without having his Report before them. Had the Navy received any application from the Astronomer Royal or any other astronomers for the loan of a ship to enable them to observe the coming eclipse of the sun on May 28, wherever totality was visible? He understood that an application had been made, but that the astronomers had been "choked off." He expressed his very great regret that the application had not been granted. The hon. Member also asked whether the Admiralty had been approached about assisting an Antarctic expedition. He hoped they would do anything that lay in their power in that direction.

*CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS asked why there had been a reduction in the Vote for surveys on the coast of England, as they required considerable correction and revision.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) asked whether the Admiralty intended to give any assistance to the committee of the Royal Society who were now endeavouring to organise a further expedition to the Antarctic Sea. A former Member of the House (Sir George Newnes) had organised an expedition of his own, and they had landed on one of the islands in the Antarctic Sea. The hon. Member also asked whether anything was being done with respect to the hydrographical surveys of the fresh water lakes of Great Britain and Ireland, partially undertaken some years ago. It had been agreed by the Royal Society in England, the Royal Society in Scotland, and the corresponding body in Ireland from time to time that the Admiralty should proceed with the hydrographical surveys and have them completed.

MR. GOSCHEN said the point raised by his hon. friend had not before been under his attention. The work to be done elsewhere by the Hydrographical Department was so great and so pressing that until they had made greater progress with the survey of Australian waters and of other places really important to commerce they could not undertake an inland survey. With reference to the Antarctic expedition, the Admiralty did not see their way to undertake an expedition themselves, because it would take away a ship and a number of officers for a considerable time. They had not a plethora of officers, and they could not spare a number of able officers, because some of the best would have to go on an expedition of that kind. They had, however, offered to give any information that had been gathered in other expeditions, and to help in the selection of instruments. He did not remember that any suggestion had been brought before the Admiralty relative to the eclipse, but he would make inquiries.

Resolution agreed to.

6. £271,100, Royal Naval Reserves.

COMMANDER BETHELL observed that recently the First Lord of the Admiralty had undertaken to introduce certain reforms, and personally, in the circumstances, he did not very much care to enter upon a discussion of the Vote. It seemed only reasonable that time should

be allowed for what the right hon. Gentleman had undertaken to do.

Resolution agreed to.

7. £3,004,700, Naval Armaments.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said a doubt had been expressed as to whether we had a sufficient reserve of big guns for the Navy. The Government could not, he thought, be pressed to give full information to the House in regard to the question of reserve guns, and he should like also to add that he did not believe that in regard to this matter we were in an unfavourable position as compared with other Powers. He was not complaining that we were worse off than other Powers, but he wished to suggest that it might be of great advantage to ourselves in the event of war if we kept a larger reserve of big guns than any of the Powers keep at present. There was likely to be more and more target practice, and the repair of guns worn in target practice and also in war was a comparatively slow matter. He once more asked the Admiralty Board to bear in mind the essential necessity of having a very large stock of guns. There had been a very full debate in the French Chamber on the question of guns, and a gentleman, an ironmaster, who was an authority on the subject, had in that debate drawn a close comparison between the equipment of the British and French fleets as regards guns. The right hon. Gentleman attached the greatest importance to the statements made by that ironmaster, and these statements were somewhat alarming to ourselves in regard to the French and their guns. We had learned in the past that the French were remarkable for their large guns. It was one of the points on which we had been obliged to admit that they were superior to ourselves. Although in past years our own progress in gun making had been very great, still the statements made in the debate in the French Chamber in regard to ourselves were of a kind which certainly caused some anxiety. It was stated distinctly that they had examined into the armaments for the "Resolute," the "Hannibal," the "Jupiter," and the "Mars," and the French authorities prided themselves that our guns had failed at their full charges, and therefore all the reports

we had as to the usefulness of these new guns were of a most alarming nature. Of course they could not in that House solve such questions as these. They were highly technical, and all they could do was to ask the Admiralty whether they felt as confident in the performances of the guns as they had told the House on former occasions.

MR. GOSCHEN said that his own impression as to these statements was that they were not correct. The question of superiority in guns depended on whether more importance was attached to the initial velocity or to the velocity at the end of the trajectory. There was no doubt that the French were very ingenious in all questions of guns. As regarded the reserve of guns, there had always been a regular standard, and that standard was being fully maintained. The attention of the Admiralty had been called to the experience gained by the Naval Brigade in South Africa as to the wear of guns, and he was engaged in going through the standard of reserves in order to see whether, by the light of that experience, it was up-to the mark, or whether a higher standard ought to be introduced. So far as the existing standards were concerned, and they were considered ample, they were not one gun behind.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was very satisfactory indeed in regard to the reserves. In the recent debate in the French Chamber the figures brought out the superiority of the French guns over ours. They demonstrated it at every period of the shot.

MR. GOSCHEN thought that was doubtful. The figures with regard to the French guns to which the right hon. Baronet had referred were, he believed, put forward rather for Parliamentary purposes than to square with the facts.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB pointed out that the naval guns used in South Africa were taken from ships. He would like to know whether there was a reserve of guns in that station to replace them.

MR. GOSCHEN said there was a reserve of guns at all stations, and when ships with a particular kind of gun left a

Sir Charles Dilke.

station a change was made in the reserve. He was now considering whether there should not be a central reserve as well as the station reserves.

ADMIRAL FIELD said they were told that a new 7½ in. gun was to be ordered on trial. If the trial was satisfactory they would have to get money for fifty guns of that kind. In regard to an explosion of gun-cotton some time ago, the Ordnance Committee must have reported their opinion long ago as to the cause of that explosion. It was a matter affecting the whole of our magazines and every ship in the service, and it should not be lightly passed over. The Committee had had this matter before them long enough, and it was time they had the Committee's report. Was anything to be gained by secrecy in the matter? It was a matter known to the whole world, and surely the public should be reassured upon it.

MR. GOSCHEN replied that the Ordnance Committee were making an examination into the matter. It would be unwise to form impressions before they had the whole information before them from the scientific body who were inquiring into this.

Resolution agreed to.

8. £271,200, Miscellaneous Effective Services.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £267,100, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of the Admiralty Office, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said this was the only Vote on which the administration of the Department could be discussed, and he did not think that could conveniently be done that night. He suggested that the discussion should be postponed. Considering the importance of the works, and that many of them were new, and that many developments must have taken place within the past twelve months, the Admiralty would lose nothing if they allowed the Vote to be withdrawn and to be discussed after Whitsuntide.

MR. GOSCHEN accepted the suggestion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

9. £786,700, Half-Pay, Reserved, and Retired Pay.

ADMIRAL FIELD asked whether any efforts had been made to check applications for the commutation of retired pay. Many officers had been ruined by putting their money into speculative ventures, and some of them had ended their days in the workhouse. He wanted the First Lord of the Admiralty to discourage the practice as much as possible.

MR. MACARTNEY said that this had been done.

Resolution agreed to.

10. £1,123,600, Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate Allowances.

*MR. KEARLEY: The point I wish to raise is whether certain naval pensioners, under contract as we allege, are entitled to certain augmentations on reaching the age of fifty-five years. I propose briefly to trace the origin of the arrangements which led up to this understanding being arrived at. In 1865 it was found advisable to close Greenwich Hospital for in-pensioners. A contract or arrangement was come to with those who were inhabiting Greenwich Hospital at that time that in lieu of enjoying the benefits of Greenwich as in-pensioners they should receive, on attaining the age of fifty-five an augmentation of 5d. per day of their pension, and that at sixty-five there should be another augmentation of 4d. That was confirmed by a circular issued by the Admiralty in 1868. There was no question of limitation of numbers until 1878, when a circular was issued limiting the number to 7,500. In justification of this course it was urged that the funds were only sufficient to provide augmentation pensions for that number. These pensioners were entitled to go into Greenwich Hospital and live there as in-pensioners, and the basis of the arrangement was that they should become out-pensioners and receive these augmentations. There is ample reason for the funds being insufficient, but the cause was not any action on

the part of the pensioners, but on the part of the Government in deliberately misapplying the funds and taking away from the hospital funds to which it was justly entitled. As to the breach of contract, on the last occasion upon which this matter was brought forward,* we alleged that the men had been confirmed in their belief that they were entitled to these pensions, to which the reply of the Civil Lord was a denial, and we were asked why we did not produce a recruiting bill on which it was stated that these augmentation pensions would be paid without limitation of numbers. That was rather a poser. But some notice was taken of the debate, and the hon. Member for Portsmouth a few weeks after received a communication from an old recruiting officer living in retirement at Bristol, stating that this officer had himself recruited a large number for the marines, to whom he had promised, on the authority of the Government, that they should have this augmentation at fifty-five years of age. He also found the bill, a copy of which I have here, in which it is deliberately stated that after completing his time and attaining the age of fifty-five years the recruit should receive in addition to his pension fivepence per day. This bill has been brought to the attention of the Admiralty. It is perfectly possible for them to repudiate all responsibility, but that will not dispose of the question. This recruiting bill may not be a legal contract, but it certainly forms a moral contract, and there is no getting away from the fact that throughout the Navy there is a strenuous belief that every man who joined the Navy prior to 1878 is entitled to this augmentation. There was a Committee appointed in 1886 to inquire into the practicability of a scheme that had been suggested by the sailors themselves to provide for their widows a pension. Incidentally this question of Greenwich Hospital cropped up, and some of the Members expressed in very definite terms their opinion as to this belief of the men to which I have referred. One gentleman observes—

"Although you cannot look upon these recruiting placards as legal contracts enforceable in a court of law, they are moral contracts."

I leave the matter at that. A far greater

* See discussion on this Vote on the 24th June, 1898 (*The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lx., commencing at p. 99.)

claim for consideration arises in the fact that the funds of Greenwich Hospital have been diverted and misapplied. Those funds are really the property of seamen. By several Acts of Parliament a compulsory levy was made upon all seamen of Her Majesty's Fleet of 6d. per month in support of Greenwich Hospital. That levy commenced as far back as the reign of William III., when it applied to England only. The Act was extended in the reign of Anne and made to apply to Great Britain and Ireland. It was still further extended in the reign of George II. and made to apply not only to Great Britain and Ireland, but also to the Channel Islands and the American Colonies. Every sailor, therefore, in the service of the Crown at that time, whether he liked it or not, had to contribute 6d. per month towards the funds of Greenwich Hospital. In 1834 those various Acts were repealed, and in lieu of that compulsory contribution it was enacted that there should be an annual payment of £20,000 a year from the Consolidated Fund. That was the bargain. It was also clearly laid down in the Act of Parliament that that £20,000 was to be as it were a debenture to be paid in perpetuity. I take it to mean that it was to be permanent payment to Greenwich Hospital. It is mentioned here in the Act of 1834, in words and terms—

"It is highly becoming to the honour and character of the British nation that these seamen at Greenwich should be supported according to the original design."

From 1834 to 1869 this contribution was regularly paid, but in the latter year the Chancellor of the Exchequer without any legal right clipped this £20,000 down to £4,000, ceasing to pay Greenwich £16,000 per annum. This continued until 1893. Therefore I maintain that the Greenwich funds were plundered out of the amount of £400,000. In 1878 a Seamen Pensioners' Reserve was formed, and as an inducement for the men to join they were promised an augmentation at fifty instead of fifty-five. The Seamen Pensioners' Reserve Fund was established for the benefit of the Navy, and it was maintained at the time that the earlier payment of the augmentation should be a charge upon Naval funds. That did not happen. It was made a charge upon Greenwich, and continued so from 1878 to 1892, with the result that there was diverted from the Greenwich fund a sum of £50,000, which

Mr. Kearley,

ought really to have been charged on the Naval Votes from year to year. Even that is not all. The buildings at Greenwich, or a large portion of them, since 1865 have been utilised as a naval college. During the whole of that period they had been assessed at no less a sum than £8,500 a year, but from 1865 to 1893 the Admiralty paid to Greenwich the insignificant rent of £100 per year. The matter was protested against again and again, but it was not until 1893 that the Greenwich fund succeeded in getting a just rent for the buildings which were practically taken away from them, the rent in that year being raised to £6,000. This £100 instead of £6,000 was paid for 28 years, so that £165,200 has to be added to the other figures I have given the Committee. It is not a question to-night of asking that these financial matters should be put right. They have already been put right. But no restitution has been made. What I argue is that although the hon. Gentleman in his reply may say that there was no contract with these men, and that the Admiralty do pay as liberally as the funds at their disposal permit, that will not cover my point that over £600,000 has been unjustly taken away from Greenwich. When it is a question of paying these pensions to 2,000 men, and the Government have deprived Greenwich of over £600,000, I think we are justified in asking that restitution should be made to these men. These men are not supplicants for the charity of the Government; this restitution is their right; they ask it in return for services rendered. I hope the hon. Gentleman will see his way to undertake that the remainder of these splendid men, who have served their country well, shall not be longer deprived of this augmentation money.

*CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS: I do not wish to dispute the statements of the hon. Gentleman opposite, but I must say that the handbill which he produces does not in my opinion count for much. If he had seen the handbills that I have seen he would know that in the old days promises were made which never could be fulfilled; in fact, the handbills for the manning of the ships could only be compared with the handbills which used to be issued by candidates for Parliamentary honours. There is one point in this Vote to which

I wish to call attention, and that is the pensions to petty officers, seamen, and marines. There is a widespread feeling in the navy that chief petty officers do not get their full due. They count for pensions only at the same rate as first-class petty officers, while the chief petty officer has very much greater responsibility, and I think they are worthy of better consideration.

***MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN :** If my hon. and gallant friend who has just spoken will permit me, I will not at present reply to the point he has raised, but will address myself to the matter referred to by the hon. Member opposite, which I think merits an answer to itself. The hon. Member did not tell the Committee exactly on whose behalf he made this claim for an increased age pension as a matter of right on reaching the ages referred to. I understood his argument to be that every seaman and marine was so entitled on account of the recruiting bills which had been issued.

MR. KEARLEY : I cannot charge my memory at the moment as to whether marines are equally entitled. I will satisfy myself by giving that explanation. I really cannot say at the moment. It is good enough for me to claim it on behalf of the seamen pensioners.

***MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN :** That is what I want to know, whether it is claimed on behalf of the seamen pensioners as well as on behalf of marine pensioners on account of the recruiting bills. That is one basis of the claim, and the other basis is on account of certain sums not having been paid to Greenwich Hospital to which the hon. Gentleman thinks that charity was entitled. As regards these sums there is no cause of complaint at the present time. The complaint was that the rent paid for the buildings occupied by the Royal Naval College was merely nominal, and did not represent the full value. At present and for some little time past the rent has represented the full value. I am sometimes inclined to wonder whether the Admiralty, if they had foreseen when the college was first established that they would have had to pay so large a rent for the buildings, would not have acted more wisely and prudently in securing buildings elsewhere. As regards the

other sum which the hon. Member alleges was diverted, I think the Committee will see there is a good deal to be said for the deduction if the Report of the Select Committee on this particular question is read. The Committee reported in 1892 that naval pensioners when inmates were not permitted to draw their naval life pensions; the pensions were suspended. There was thus a considerable saving to the Exchequer. On the closing of the hospital the men previously maintained there resumed their naval pensions, a corresponding charge being thereby laid upon the Exchequer. In order to make good to the Exchequer this additional charge it was decided to abate to an equivalent extent the grant of £20,000 to the hospital. The Committee went on to say that for this course there may have been sufficient excuse at the time when the funds of the hospital were equal to the claims upon them, but now that the funds, owing to the increasing demands, are insufficient, the Committee recommended that the grant should be restored. That grant was restored and has been paid to the hospital since then.

MR. KEARLEY : But not the arrears.

***MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN :** When Parliament year after year has approved of certain payments being stopped or other payments being made, I do not think that many years afterwards we should be called upon to revise those decisions simply because certain Members to-day are not satisfied with the decisions of the House of Commons of thirty or forty years ago. If the hon. Member desires me to be perfectly frank, I do not think the payment of these age pensions indiscriminately to every man who reaches the age of fifty-five or sixty-five, whether he be in need or not, and no matter what the extent of the pension to which he is entitled, is the best use to which the funds of this great charity can be put. But I do admit, in view of the past history of this question, that it is undesirable to lessen the amount we are now paying; indeed, I would be glad if larger funds were available. I do not, however, consider the case is so strong as to require that we should provide fresh funds when the funds of the charity are sufficient. Then comes the question of the recruiting Bill. It was contended two years ago that the seamen and

marines of the Fleet had been given to understand that the age pension would be paid as a right to every man who reached the age of 55, with an augmentation at 65, and that, as a matter of fact, no limitation of numbers had been made by the Admiralty as trustees for Greenwich Hospital up to the date of the Fleet circular issued in 1878, which did distinctly limit the pensions to the number of 7,500. That is not so. What are these pensions? They are the compensation given to the seamen and marines of the Fleet for the closing of Greenwich Hospital. What was Greenwich Hospital? The hon. Member said we were bound to satisfy all these men who, he alleged, were formerly entitled to go into Greenwich Hospital and live there. The Charter of 1694, which established Greenwich Hospital, expressly declared that it was "for the relief and support of seamen serving on board ships or vessels belonging to the Royal Navy, who by reason of age, wounds, or other disabilities, should be incapable of further service at sea and be unable to maintain themselves." I call the attention of the Committee to that. It was a charity intended for those who by reason of these various causes were unable to maintain themselves. To contend that because men who were unable to maintain themselves were received into Greenwich Hospital, therefore, on the closing of Greenwich Hospital, all men, whether able to maintain themselves or not, became entitled to an augmented pension, is a contention which cannot be supported by any logical argument. It is admitted that as regards any seaman or marine who entered service after 1878 the case is clear, because in that year the pensions were limited to 7,500. But when they were first established they were limited. The Committee which recommended the closing of Greenwich Hospital stated in their Report that—

"it will be equally necessary to limit the number of extra pensions to be granted. Allowing a fair margin, we think that provision should be made for 5,000 extra pensions, and we are of opinion that that number should be the maximum granted."

That was published as a Parliamentary Paper in 1865, and as a matter of fact from 1865 to 1869 the Board did actually limit the number of pensions to 5,000, and the number was only extended by a minute of the Board which was never

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

published. Therefore the only published information was that the number should be limited to 5,000. The hon. Member has produced a bill on which he bases his claim that all men who entered the service prior to 1878 are entitled to this pension. What is the bill? It is a bill issued by a marine recruiting officer at Bristol—his own composition, I presume, not submitted to the Admiralty, and, I regret to say, incorrect in many of its details. I do not know whether the hon. Member would say that in addition to being morally bound by the statement in this bill that these pensions would be given, we are equally bound by other statements in the bill, equally incorrect, equally unauthorised, and equally in contradiction of everything the Admiralty ever themselves published. What is this bill? This bill excludes the seamen, and deals only with marines. It is a very significant fact that whilst these age pensions were offered by the Admiralty on exactly similar terms to both seamen and marines, the Bristol bill contains no such promise, the promise being confined to the particular bill of the marines.

MR. KEARLEY: From where did you obtain your bill?

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: From the door of the Bristol recruiting office. When the hon. Member for Portsmouth was good enough to inform me he had received this bill, it was my first duty to endeavour to ascertain exactly how the bill came to be published, who published it, and so on. The person who issued the bill is an officer since dead, so that I am absolutely unable to explain how he came to make these inaccurate statements. We found that one marine officer thought he could recollect some such bill being used. But in any case it is admitted that no one who came into the service after 1878 has any title to an age pension, because in 1878 a Fleet circular was issued distinctly stating that the pensions would be limited to 7,500. What is the date of this bill? I do not know exactly how long it was in use, but it certainly was not in use until 1879.

MR. KEARLEY: How do you fix the date?

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I obtained the date from the hon. Member for Portsmouth.

MR. KEARLEY : It is not dated.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN : The hon. Member for Portsmouth told me that his informant stated it was used between the years 1879 and 1883.

MR. KEARLEY : That does not quite accord with my information.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN : I cannot decide when doctors differ. But, in any case, the bill was only printed in the autumn of 1877, so that if it was put into use the moment it was printed it could only have been in use for a few weeks.

MR. KEARLEY : How do you know it was printed in 1877 ?

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN : Because I inquired of the printers.

MR. KEARLEY : Was it printed by the Admiralty ?

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN : No. It was printed at the order of the marine recruiting officer at Bristol, without any instructions from the Admiralty and without the Admiralty having seen it. It was a regrettable practice in those days that the recruiting officers were allowed to publish their own literature without submitting it to the Admiralty. The name of the printers is at the bottom of the bill, and they were good enough to let us search their books, and we found that the order was given in, I think, October, 1877. So that, to put it as high as possible, the bill can only apply to the marines in the Bristol district who entered between October or November, 1877, and the issue of the Fleet circular in 1878. On that ground how many marines do the Committee suppose are entitled to claim this pension at present ? Not a single marine who entered at that time has yet reached the age of fifty-five ; not one therefore would, under any circumstances whatever, be eligible for the age pension. I therefore think the Committee will see that this misconception is not and cannot be taken as a ground for an argument that successive Boards of Admiralty have been guilty of breach of faith with the men who have served the country, but that we in distributing an even larger sum than we promised have fully discharged our obligations.

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MR. MENDEL : A more extraordinary story than that just told with regard to this bill has seldom been heard. Two years ago, when this question was raised, the Admiralty denied that there was a contract, and challenged us to produce a bill issued by them or by their servants which would have encouraged the belief in the minds of anyone eligible for these pensions that they had a right to them. Thereupon the hon. Member for Portsmouth found this bill, of which the Civil Lord has made so light to-night on the ground that it was issued by a recruiting officer for whom the Admiralty were not responsible. We are told that the Admiralty allowed this recruiting officer to have his own bills printed, and I think that does leave a very strong moral obligation on the Admiralty to stand by the statements in that bill. It may be quite true that the bill does not give the seamen this right by contract. All that has been contended is that this bill is evidence that the Admiralty or their officers had held out to the men who joined the Navy the anticipation of their being entitled to this augmentation of pension at the age of fifty-five. We must not lose sight of the very small number of men to whom this applies. There are only about two thousand who are now deprived of the pension to which they think they have a right. There is a very strong ground for asking the Government to look into this matter from the broad standpoint of whether it would not be in the interests of the country and of the Navy that the question should be put right, as it could be by the expenditure of a very small sum of money.

Resolution agreed to.

11. £343,500, Civil Pensions and Gratuities.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £60,300, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the expense necessary to be provided for under the arrangement made between the Imperial and Australasian Governments for the protection of floating trade in Australasian waters, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND : I would like to ask for some statement as to the position of the Navy with regard to the

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Australian colonies. It does not appear to be quite clear from this Vote how much the Australian colonies pay for the protection of floating trade in Australasian waters. I hold the opinion that the sum paid by the various colonies is altogether inadequate to meet the justice of the case. The total Naval Estimates for this year will not be far short of £30,000,000. Are we to be told that the Australasian Governments, representing a population much greater than that of Ireland, will only pay £126,000 towards that tremendous sum? I should like to compare that miserable amount with the enormous contribution the Irish people will have to pay. But notwithstanding the great difference between the amounts, when I asked the First Lord of the Admiralty a few days ago if he would send a gunboat or a torpedo boat to protect the fishermen of Wexford against foreign steam trawlers I was told it could not be done. I think the time has arrived when there ought to be some readjustment of these colonial contributions towards the maintenance of the Imperial Army and Navy.

It being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow.

Committee also report progress; to sit again to-morrow.

COAL MINES (PROHIBITION OF CHILD LABOUR UNDERGROUND) BILL.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE asked what course the Government proposed to take with regard to this measure. The hon. Members from whom some objection had been expected had intimated their intention of not opposing the Second Reading, and therefore it rested with the Government to say what course should be taken.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley) was understood to say that he would make inquiries in regard to the matter.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the motion for the adjournment of the House,

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In moving the adjournment of the House perhaps I
Mr. William Redmond.

ought to make a very brief statement about business. The Navy Estimates have practically gone through to-night, and, as the House knows, to-morrow is allocated in the ordinary course to Supply. In order to meet the wishes of the hon. Gentlemen I have promised not to take Civil Service Estimates without giving a week's notice. Owing to the indisposition of my hon. friend the Under Secretary of State for War I am unable to take Army Estimates, and therefore it is absolutely impossible that Estimates should occupy our time to-morrow. There are some small Estimates we might deal with, such as have been left over from to-night, and the Ordnance Vote, but if I put those down first it would make to-morrow count as a day of Supply, which it certainly ought not to do, as those Estimates could not occupy the whole of the evening. I therefore propose to take Government Bills, and the Bills I shall put down will be in the following order: First, the next stage of the Police Reservists (Allowances) Bill; second, Census (Great Britain) Bill; third, Factories and Workshops Bill, Second Reading; and fourth, Lunacy Board (Scotland) (Salaries, etc.) Bill. After that I shall put down the Ordnance Vote and the remaining Votes of the Navy Estimates.

MR. BUCHANAN pointed out that the Factories and Workshops Bill was only issued that morning, and he had quite incidentally discovered that it affected the whole fishing industry of Scotland. Surely it was only reasonable that the community at large should have some opportunity of mastering the contents of the Bill before the Second Reading.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.), SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston), and SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) also asked that longer notice should be given.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR replied that while he entirely appreciated the remarks of hon. Members, it had to be borne in mind that at the Second Reading stage only the broad principles of the Bill would be dealt with. He would put the Bill down for Friday, and he hoped hon. Members would endeavour to come prepared to discuss those broad principles.

Adjourned at ten minutes after
Twelve of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 9th March, 1900.

. VISCOUNT GORT.

Petition of John Gage Prendergast, Viscount Gort, claiming a right to vote at the elections of representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

GWYRFAL RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
WATER BILL [H.L.].

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Order made on the 27th of February last discharged, and Bill committed.

SHEFFIELD DISTRICT RAILWAY BILL
[H.L.].

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Order made on the 2nd instant discharged, and Bill committed.

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY BILL [H.L.].
Committed.SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]
DUBLIN, WICKLOW, AND WEXFORD
RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Committed: The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

EDINBURGH DISTRICT LUNACY
BOARD BILL [H.L.].

EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL [H.L.]

ROTHERHITHE AND RATCLIFF
TUNNEL BILL [H.L.].LONDON SEA WATER SUPPLY BILL
[H.L.].SUNDERLAND CORPORATION BILL
[H.L.].NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY (STEAM
VESSELS) BILL [H.L.].

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Falmouth be proposed to the House as a member of

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the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Muncaster; read, and agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).
No. 2387. Havre and District.BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS,
AND VACCINATION (SCOTLAND).

Forty-fifth Annual Report by the Registrar-General in Scotland, for the year 1899; and Thirty-fifth Annual Report on Vaccination.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LUNACY.

Return of all sums received by the visitors of lunatics for travelling expenses or upon any other account from the 1st January to the 31st December, 1899.

INEBRIATES ACT, 1898.

Regulations for certified inebriate reformatories in Scotland.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

*LORD KINNAIRD: I rise to ask the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury whether any precedent can be found since the Reformation Settlement was enacted by the passing of the 1st Elizabeth, Chapters 1 and 2, in which Prayers for the Dead have ever been introduced "by authority" into any special services put forth by any of the Archbishops of Canterbury. I do not propose to enter into any historical or theological discussion, but there are many people throughout the country, including Church dignitaries, whose minds have been somewhat excited by the words put into the form of intercession. Within a week of the time when the Bishops asked that this year might not be one in which any controversy should arise, these words appeared which some of us regard as an innovation, and possibly his Grace the Archbishop may say something to calm the fears of some who have been surprised and pained by the words used.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I cannot answer

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the noble Lord's question in detail; I have not been able to look through all the precedents, and the number of prayers that have been issued by the authority of the Crown is too great to make it possible without a very great deal of labour to find out exactly whether any forms of prayer have been previously issued in which the words used express precisely the same thing as the words to be found in the prayer recently put forth. I hold in my hand, however, two documents of the same character—that is to say, forms of this kind. One of them is a “form of prayer and thanksgiving to Almighty God to be used in all churches and chapels for general thanksgiving for many and signal victories which Divine Providence has vouchsafed to his Majesty in the course of the war.” The date of this is 1797, and in that form I find words that come very near indeed to the language—it would be impossible to draw a distinction between them—in the prayer which has been lately issued. I will just read the words that your Lordships may know what the words are to which I refer. In the form of prayer set forth for use on December 19, 1797, these words occur—

“And for those whom in this righteous cause Thy Providence permits to fall, receive we pray Thee their souls to Thy mercy.”

That prayer was issued in the usual way on the date I have mentioned, and again in the same manner a year later—on 29th November, 1798. These words come as near as anything can well come, when the words are not identical, to the prayer lately issued, though the words take a somewhat different form—

“And for all those who have fallen, that they with us may enter into that rest which Thou hast prepared for those who believe in Thee.”

If you take this to pieces, the “rest” which is here spoken of is that rest to which all those who fall in the faith of Christ will be brought at the final change which is to pass over every one of us at the Resurrection Day. What is to happen after our death and before resurrection is not known distinctly; it is not anywhere told us in the New Testament. We really do not know, but we do receive some idea that those who have followed the true faith are during that interval to have happiness so far that they are in the presence of God, but are still waiting for that great change which will come to all. The prayer looks forward to that time,

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praying that those who have fallen in the true faith may “enter with us into that rest which Thou hast prepared for those who believe in Thee.” The only objection I have ever heard made to this is that when they have entered into that rest, when once they have passed into the hands of God, it is impossible that they can have any addition to their happiness. Well, there is nothing in the New Testament that implies that the happiness is always exactly the same, and that there is no possibility of increase; but there is in the New Testament sufficient to lead us to the belief that, at any rate, there is one thing that can increase their happiness—that is, that they should be reunited with those whom they loved on earth, and so the prayer is not simply that they may enter into rest, but that they with us may enter into rest, and the idea of reunion with those whom they loved here is the very essence of the petition. I do not suppose there is any Christian who will hesitate to say that happiness will certainly be increased by the reunion of those who really loved one another. The idea which is very often expressed that those who are happy need no addition at all would imply that it is a matter of indifference to them whether the loved ones left behind did or did not join them. This prayer expresses no such idea, but a precisely opposite idea—that they with us may have that great blessing in common. Of course, I am aware that prayers for the dead are not common in the Church of England, and that such prayers have been struck out altogether from the ordinary services, but, nevertheless, it is quite certain that the law has decided that such prayers are not outside the limits of the law. We have had the question settled before the regular Court, and that settlement has been acquiesced in ever since it was arrived at, now more than sixty years ago. Moreover, that settlement is based on the same principle as that which underlies the well-known decision in the case of Mr. Bennett. There the judges refused to condemn Mr. Bennett on the ground that the doctrine he taught was not prohibited by the Church of England. The principle of the law is, therefore, accepted. The law itself and the rule of the law which is laid down by the Court of Arches in regard to prayers for the dead leave the matter in this position—that there is no

prohibition, and that it is quite open to members of the Church of England to pray for the dead. Of course, those who are under the canons have made a promise that they will keep within the limits of the Prayer-book, and therefore they cannot without further authority offer any such prayer, because the Prayer-book does not contain any prayer directly praying for the dead, and only contains prayers which pray for the dead indirectly. The reason why the Church of England struck out direct prayers for the dead is clear from the circumstances of the Reformation. At that time prayers for the dead were almost entirely taken up with prayers for souls in purgatory, and these prayers for souls in purgatory were the source of very scandalous abuses, abuses which first caused Luther to protest against the doctrines of the Church of Rome. The Church of England has directly declared that the doctrine of purgatory, of pardons, of adoration and invocation of saints is vain and fond and contrary to the law of God, and in so far as any prayer indicates approach to anything of that kind, that prayer is unquestionably inconsistent with the teaching of the Church of England. At that time it was very difficult to draw any line, and the Church took the course of striking out all prayers that could possibly be abused without any reference to the question whether or not they would be abused. But the Church did not in any way whatever forbid the use of prayers for the dead, which it could very easily have done, and in the 22nd Article the Church could have excluded prayers for the dead altogether. But the Church did not do that, and when the judges had to decide whether or not such prayers were excluded, they decided distinctly that they were not excluded. At this time there is great and special occasion; it is a time when there are hundreds of sorrowing souls very anxious about relations engaged in the war in South Africa. They have been praying for their loved ones out there, and they feel it is hard that they may not have the comfort of praying for those who have fallen when they know, as a great many of them do know, that prayers for the dead are not forbidden. At such a time as this it is right that we should practise toleration, and where the Church has said there shall be liberty, there should be liberty for those who wish to use it. As no doubt

your Lordships know, five different forms of prayer are appointed for use, and no clergyman is tied down to the use of any particular one. He may choose any one of the five, and this particular prayer is only one of the five. Therefore it is in no way whatever a burden on the conscience of the clergy, and it gives that great consolation to very many who are feeling deeply at this time, that, without any hindrance from rules of the Church, they are allowed to pray, and join others in praying, for those whom they have lost; at any rate, to pray that the day of their final rest shall be in participation and renewal of their old affections. If it is said that, having got to their final rest, they want nothing more, I think that only shows the want of serious reflection. We are not told anywhere that the blessedness of Heaven is exactly the same for everyone, or that when once it has been given it cannot be increased. We are distinctly led to believe that those who are gone away do not lose their affection for us who have yet to follow. For that reason I think it was right to give them an opportunity of expressing their feelings in public worship. The prayer has been issued in the ordinary way. The question has been raised whether the Privy Council has any right to issue such prayers at all. But that is a matter with which I have nothing to do. The power has been used for a considerable time, and it has always been treated as a power that resided in the Crown and the Privy Council. I am not at all concerned in that question, which could only be decided by the courts of law. I am not concerned with the question whether such prayers are issued by lawful authority or not. At present they are issued as having lawful authority, and therefore they are taken as lawfully issued, and I do not see how else we can treat them. There is one more thing I should say, and that is that we have lately spoken decidedly on this matter, and told the clergy in various ways that they must not use such prayers. Why must they not? Not because they are not lawful, for the law has decided that they are, but because they have promised to use the prayers of the prayer-book, and having made that promise they are not allowed to go outside it unless they have lawful authority, and that lawful authority is given for this occasion. I cannot help

feeling that of all things we need at this time we most need absolute toleration of all that comes within the law of the Church, and we ought to show in dealing with the Church that we have no intention whatever of narrowing its limits or shutting out from any liberty which the Church has granted the desires of those who feel the need of using such liberty.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My Lords, I cannot refrain from making some comment on the language the most reverend Prelate has been using. He has not been able to bring before your Lordships any precedent since the Reformation Settlement in which prayers for the dead have ever been introduced "by authority." The most reverend Prelate constantly spoke of what he was pleased to describe as the law of the Church. I entirely dissent from him in that phrase. There is no law of the Church distinct from the law of the land, and the reason there is a strong feeling upon this question is not that this particular form of prayer is in itself so very objectionable, but that it admits a principle which is of a very far-reaching character. The most reverend Prelate says the clergy are bound to use no prayers except those permitted and retained in the Book of Common Prayer, except that other prayers from time to time may be agreed to by authority. At the same time he admits that it is not at all clear as to the legal authority upon which this prayer was issued. The authorities practically who issued this prayer were the two Archbishops and my noble friend the Lord President of the Council. It would be a very serious matter if the principles of the Church of England could be, from time to time, undermined by a process by which practically the two Archbishops, at any time, could introduce any special forms of prayer they desired. The objection to this particular prayer in the minds of people in the country is precisely that which existed at the time of the Reformation. "Black Masses" now take place in a great number of Churches of the Church of England, and the Bishops either cannot or will not exercise any authority at all in these matters over the clergy; and it is perfectly clear that when a prayer of this kind is introduced it will be used by clergymen who are opposed to the principles of the Reformation as an extenuation and defence of

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the practices they are carrying on. This is not merely an academical question, because, unfortunately, there are in many dioceses principles being introduced which are antagonistic to the Reformation. In one diocese, for instance—the diocese of St. Albans—the study of a book called "Wakeman's History of the Church of England" is made obligatory on candidates for holy orders. What is the teaching of this book? I do not wish to trespass long upon your Lordships' time, but I will read a few extracts from it to show what is going on in the Church of England under the sanction and control of certain Bishops—

"The vast majority of those who suffered (in Mary's reign) were not people even of religious influence; they were illiterate fanatics."

Again—

"That the State should send the clergy to prison for refusing to acknowledge its right to enforce the decisions of its own courts upon them in matters of faith and worship, which no one believed to be good law, soon became an unbearable scandal."

Then again—

"The training of souls in confession has taken a recognised place among the duties of the priesthood."

"From the point of view of history the Church revival of the present century is seen to be nothing more than the complete reaction against the Protestant movement of the sixteenth century."

The point which has been raised by my noble friend (Lord Kiinnaird) is not a large one in itself, but it is an important one as relating to what is going on and being taught in the Church of England. It is a matter of great regret when there is a feeling, which it is impossible to exaggerate, in the north of England, that prayers should have been introduced under the moral authority of the two Archbishops which, even supposing they are within the law, are certainly novel in principle, and give rise to grave suspicions, and will, I fear, be made use of by the very men who are endeavouring to undermine the Protestant character of the Reformation settlement.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL [H.L.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD WINDSOR: In asking your Lordships to read this Bill a second time

I need only make one or two explanatory observations. The Bill is introduced this year in exactly the same form as it left the House last session.* The Bill was read a third time by your Lordships, but, owing to the late period at which it got through the Committee stage, I withdrew it, as it was absolutely impossible to get the Bill through the House of Commons. Certain alterations were made in the Bill at the instance of the Local Government Board, and I trust that, in re-introducing it again in the same form as it left the House last session, the opposition entertained by the Local Government Board will no longer exist. The object of the Bill is really not to widen the operation of the Public Libraries Acts, but to make the Acts of 1892 and 1893 more workable and more efficient. It is said that these Bills are only a method of raising the rates for the purpose of enabling idle people to read novels and light literature, but I venture to submit that an objection of that sort is not valid as against this Bill, and ought to have been made when the Public Libraries Acts were passed. As the law at present stands, there is no qualification or disqualification mentioned for a library commissioner, and Clause 2 of this Bill proposes to supply that deficiency by providing that the qualification of a library commissioner shall be the same as the qualification of a parish councillor. At present two urban authorities may agree together to build and keep up a public library, and two or more parish authorities may agree together to do the same thing; but there is no provision to enable a parish authority to agree with an urban authority to build and maintain a public library. Clause 4 will remedy this deficiency, and enable a parish authority and an urban authority to act together. This will tend rather to economy than to an increase in the rates. Clause 11 relieves the library authorities from the danger of an action in the event of a book being left on their shelves which contains libellous matter, provided that reasonable diligence is exercised. I trust that no objection will be raised by the Local Government Board to the Second Reading of this Bill, even if certain small

alterations have to be made in Committee.

LORD HARRIS: The Local Government Board have no objection to the Bill being read a second time. The noble Lord in charge of the Bill made certain alterations in it last year which met the views of the Local Government Board. That authority, however, have objections to make to some of the details of the Bill, but these can be made in Committee.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): Clause 11 contains one of those problems to which I have a strong objection. It leaves to the discretion of the learned judge the question whether the action shall be allowed to proceed or not, but it does not indicate the principle that is to guide him. I do not oppose the Second Reading of the Bill, but I mention this matter so that the noble Lord can consider it between now and the Committee stage, as it appears to me to be the principal objection to the Bill.

Bill read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY ARBITRATION.

LORD WENLOCK: My Lords, I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether it is the fact that the International arbitration in relation to the Delagoa Bay Railway undertaken by the Berne Tribunal has now been proceeding for upwards of nine years, and, if so, what steps they have taken to impress upon the court the obligation of giving their decision, seeing that the case was finally closed as long ago as April last, and that judgment was promised in October, 1899, again in January, 1900, and has not yet been issued; and if Her Majesty's Government will state whether they are prepared to join with the Government of the United States of America in pressing for an immediate award. In putting this question to the Government I do not propose to go at any length into the complicated proceedings which led up to the appointment of the international tribunal, but I cannot help thinking that this is a matter of sufficient public importance to bring before the notice of your Lordships'

* See *The Parliamentary Debates*, Fourth Series: First Reading, March 23, 1899, Vol. lxx., page 65; Second Reading, July 25, Vol. lxxv., page 192; Committee, July 31, page 872; Report, August 3, page 1,232.

House. I think your Lordships will agree that those whose interests are at stake have every cause to complain of the delay which has taken place in regard to the decision of their case. I am given to understand that they have—and not without reason—denounced the delay which has taken place as a grave public scandal. We have heard a great deal of the advantages and benefits to be derived from international arbitration, but I think the most ardent advocates of that system will have reason to pause in their bestowal of praise on this mode of procedure after witnessing what has occurred in this particular case. The matter referred to the Berne tribunal was not very difficult of solution. It was a question of what the Portuguese Government should be called upon to pay for the cancellation of a concession of a railway and certain other advantages given to a certain body of people, and it was simplified by the fact that the Portuguese Government themselves admitted the liability which was imposed upon them by their own action, and they went so far as to hand over a sum of about £28,000 to the British Government, on account, to help the unfortunate British investors to meet their more immediate and pressing requirements. In these circumstances I think we may well ask Her Majesty's Government to assure us that they will do their best to press for an immediate award in this particular case.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, I entirely concur with the noble Lord that the delay of the Delagoa Bay arbitration is a most lamentable matter, and that we should be very glad if this litigation could be brought to an end. But the noble Lord suggests that we ought to move in the matter. I wish he had continued his speech a little longer, in order to tell us what precise kind of movement he wished us to initiate. The tribunal is not subject to us in any way whatever. We are litigants before it. If the British counsel were to get up and address a vigorous denunciation, such as the noble Lord would address to them, I am afraid they would simply tell him to hold his tongue. An official remonstrance from one of the litigants before a tribunal is not within the ordinary experience of judicial affairs. It is quite

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true that we have in years past, again and again, under various Governments, tried what unofficial representation could do to induce greater rapidity of action. I am informed that the tribunal entirely declines to admit that it is responsible for this delay. The president says, I am told, that if there is undue delay it is the fault, not of the tribunal, but of the parties. That being the state of the case, I frankly admit that our chance of taking any action which would effect the object the noble Lord has in view is very small. I quite concur with him that it is unfortunate, not only in its bearing on the fortunes of the litigants, but also in the discredit that it reflects on the value of the principle of arbitration, from which we had hoped great things. There is no doubt that the Powers will be less willing to refer any differences they may have to arbitration if they are told that the proceedings will take nine years before a result is obtained. I can only join with the noble Lord in lamenting this result, and I can assure him that, while we should be glad to do anything we can do in this case, it is entirely outside our power to coerce the action of the tribunal.

MILITIA BALLOT BILL [H.L.]

[INTRODUCTION.]

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: Before your Lordships separate I wish to present a Bill, entitled "An Act to amend the Law relating to Ballot for the Militia in England and Wales." This is not my own Bill; it is a founding which I picked up inanimate and comatose on the steps of the War Office. I have made no change in it except to substitute my own name on the back of it for that of the Marquess of Lansdowne. In Committee I shall endeavour to make the Bill much less harsh and onerous to the people of the country than it is as it stands now. I believe by law a man is bound to support his own child, and in the circumstances I do not see how my noble friend the Secretary of State for War or the noble Marquess at the head of the Government can oppose the Bill, in spite of the statement of the Prime Minister on a former occasion that in his view the adoption of ballot for the Militia would cause wholesale emigration of the young men of the country. I hope your Lordships will give a favourable consideration to the Bill, and that when we get

into Committee we shall endeavour to make it not only a useful and permanent measure, but one which will not weigh heavily on the people of this country. I beg to move the First Reading of the Bill.

A Bill to amend the law relating to the ballot for the Militia in England and Wales—Was presented by the Lord Wemyss (E. Wemyss); read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 23.)

MIDWIVES BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to secure the better training of midwives, and to regulate their practice—Was presented by the Lord Glenesk; read 1^a; to be printed; and to read 2^a on Tuesday next. (No. 24.)

House adjourned at twenty minutes past Five of the Clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven of the Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 9th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely—

Bray and Enniskerry Railway Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

BOILERS REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION BILL.

Petition from Leeds, against; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Twrcelyn; Stratford-on-Avon; and Menai Bridge; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Rockingham; and Grange Moor; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Streatham Hill, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Spennymoor; and Harpurley; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Camberwell; Patricroft; Urmston; Sunderland; Armley; Forest Gate; Stratford; Stratford-upon-Avon; Birmingham (two); Sheffield; Exmouth; Manchester; Hartlepool; and Edgbaston; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ROYAL PATRIOTIC COMMISSION.

Return [presented 23rd February] to be printed. [No. 91.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2387 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS.

Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of December, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND).

Annual Returns presented, of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland and the Local Courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES, AND VACCINATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of the Forty-fifth Annual Report on the Births, Deaths, and Marriages in Scotland for 1899, and Thirty-fifth Annual Report on Vaccination [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (SCOTLAND) (REGULATIONS).

Copy presented, of Regulations under the Inebriates Act, 1898, made by the Secretary for Scotland for the rule and management of a State Inebriate Reformatory, and for the classification, treatment, employment, and control of persons sent to it, and for their absence under licence [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 92.]

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Lunacy.—Copy of Return of all sums received by the visitor of lunatics for travelling expenses, or upon any other account, from 1st January to 31st December, 1899 [by Act].

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—DEFENCE OF KIMBERLEY — PRESENTATION OF MEDALS BY MR. RHODES.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): On behalf of the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire, Eifion Division, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether Mr. Cecil Rhodes has proposed, as has been reported, to present a medal to the soldiers that were engaged in the defence of Kimberley; and whether he will be permitted to assume the function of dispensing honours to Her Majesty's troops.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.) (for Mr. WYNDHAM): No such proposal has been communicated by Mr. Rhodes to the War Office.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: And as to the second part of the question, suppose it were offered?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

PURCHASES OF HORSES AND MULES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether many of the foreign mules and horses purchased for the service have been found unsatisfactory; and whether he can state the relative numbers of the supply of animals obtained from the various countries, including Great Britain and Ireland, within the last twelve months.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): There have been no complaints of foreign horses, nor of the mules, except in the case of Italy, from which country a number of mules were despatched which (from their size and shape) proved unsuitable for South African draught. The approximate numbers purchased have been as follows:—Horses: Great Britain, 12,010; Ireland, 4,746; Australia, 406. Cobs: Argentina, 5,864; Australia, 300. Mules: Italy, 7,004; Spain, 4,507; North America, 15,903.

MR. WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): How many of the 12,000 horses stated to have been purchased in England were purchased in Scotland?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I understand that the greater includes the less, and that, therefore, England includes Scotland.

SCOTTISH HON. MEMBERS: No, no!

COMFORTS FOR THE TROOPS—MR. HAMILTON GATLIFF.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he is aware that Mr. Hamilton Gatliff proceeded to South Africa at his own expense, and has, up to the present time, undertaken gratuitously the distribution of the clothing and other comforts sent out by friends at home to the several regiments at the front; whether, as in rendering this service he is aiding in maintaining the efficiency of the soldiers in the field, this is rather a duty that should properly be discharged by the War Department, and should not be dependent on voluntary effort; and whether the Government are prepared to recognise in any way the service rendered by Mr. Hamilton Gatliff.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Everything necessary for the subsistence and efficiency of the troops in South Africa is supplied and distributed by the War Department. The work of distributing comforts sent by private persons, which are not necessities, does not properly fall within the duties of the military staff; and Mr. Gatliff's generous offer to carry out this service without pay or reward was gladly accepted by the Secretary of State.

GENERAL LAURIE: Are we to consider that shirts and socks are not necessary for the troops?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I suppose that both shirts and socks are necessary. The supply of such articles to the troops is considered to be sufficient for actual service; but generous individuals had supplemented it.

COLONIAL COMMISSIONS.

MR. GILES (Cambridgeshire, Wisbech): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the officers commanding the Canadian, Australian, and other Colonial forces in South Africa hold Her Majesty's commission, and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Government will consider whether, out of regard to the services rendered by them to Her Majesty and the Empire, they ought to be entitled to receive a similar commission from Her Majesty to that of the Volunteer officers in this country, and to retain on retirement the rank held and won by them in service in South Africa.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Both officers and men of the Colonial forces in South Africa derive their military status from their Colonial Governments, and it would not appear expedient to alter this. The question of retention of rank on retirement rests with the various Colonial Governments.

IRISH REGIMENTS—WEARING OF THE SHAMROCK.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will see that arrangements are made for sending shamrock from Ireland to the troops in Great Britain and other countries where it could reach them in time for St. Patrick's Day next.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): There is no reason for supposing that it will be beyond the powers of Irish regiments to provide themselves with a supply of shamrock, and the Secretary of State is of opinion that such a supply should be procured by regimental arrangement. The regiments are probably better able than the War Office to obtain the genuine plant.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, now that Her Majesty has ordered the wearing of shamrock by the Army on St. Patrick's Day, he will order that an additional shilling be paid to each soldier on that day to enable the men to fittingly celebrate the day.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Army funds could hardly be appropriated for the purpose which the hon. Member suggests.

MR. T. B. CURRAN (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the order recently issued by Her Majesty the Queen, commanding all ranks in the Irish regiments to wear a sprig of shamrock on St. Patrick's Day will be extended to individual Irishmen in every one of Her Majesty's regiments.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: All Irishmen, whether serving in Irish regiments or not, will be allowed to wear the shamrock on St. Patrick's Day.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that when I raised this question I was turned out of the House, the Government will now apologise to me?

IRISHMEN IN THE NAVY—WEARING OF THE SHAMROCK.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he will ask Her Majesty to be pleased to command that all Irishmen in the Navy shall wear shamrock on St. Patrick's Day.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): There are no regulations with regard to the wearing of emblems on special days in the Royal Navy. I could not ask Her Majesty to issue such

a command as is suggested, even looking to the fact that shamrock is not procurable on foreign stations or on the high seas. But the Admiralty will have no objection to Irishmen in the Navy wearing a sprig of shamrock on St. Patrick's Day, and commanding officers will be so informed.

HIGH ANGLE RIFLE FIRE—DR. CONAN DOYLE'S INVENTION.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the fact that Dr. Conan Doyle submitted to the War Office particulars of an invention for securing accuracy of high angle rifle fire, and will he explain the grounds on which that Department declined to investigate the merits of the invention, or to give the inventor an opportunity of explaining the invention, or of witnessing experiments, if any, made for the purpose of testing the value of it.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The answer to the first question is in the affirmative. It was thought unnecessary to trouble Dr. Conan Doyle to proceed further in the matter because a similar invention by another gentleman had been considered as recently as last December, and it had been decided that the probable practical utility of such fire was not such as to justify the War Office in pursuing the matter further.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE: Was Dr. Conan Doyle's invention the same as that which had been previously considered?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Both inventions dealt with high angle firing for small arms.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE: Was there any difference between the two inventions?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I believe there is no practical difference; the idea is the same, anyhow.

MESSING ALLOWANCES.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will now consider the advisability of abolishing the messing allowance with all its complica-

tions, and adding in lieu thereof three-pence a day to the pay of the warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Regular forces and Militia.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): It is not considered advisable to make a change in the direction suggested.

MILITIA—PRELIMINARY TRAINING OF RECRUITS.

*MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in the interests of the embodied Militia and to encourage recruiting, arrangements could be made for posting Militia recruits straight to one of the Militia battalions, if stationed at home, instead of in the first instance to the regimental dépôt for preliminary training.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Militia recruits can best learn their drill at the headquarters of the regimental district.

DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY ARBITRATION.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the arbitration in relation to the Delagoa Bay Railway has now been proceeding for ten years; whether repeated promises of an early decision by the Berne Tribunal have been made to Her Majesty's Government and repeated in this House during the past five years; and what is the real cause of delay in giving the award.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The first meeting of the arbitrators took place on the 3rd of August, 1891. No promise as to the date of the final decision has been given or repeated in the House of Commons. Her Majesty's Government were given to understand that the award would be delivered not later than October last. The delay in promulgating the decision is extremely regrettable.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: Can the right hon. Gentleman state when the award will be given?

[No answer was returned.]

BUDGET RESOLUTIONS—BROKERS' CONTRACT NOTES.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Resolution on brokers' contract notes will include memoranda forwarded to principals of sales or purchases made on the Manchester Exchange, and in similar places, by agents receiving commission.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HANBURY, Preston) (for the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER): So far as can be judged from the description of the memoranda which the question contains, such documents would certainly attract the proposed new stamp duty. But I would ask hon. Members to be good enough to wait for explanations until they see the clause in the Bill, which I hope will be circulated in a few days.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the term "broker" in the Resolution relating to stamps on contract notes is intended to include all agents selling or purchasing on commission for a principal; and, if not, what distinction is to be understood.

MR. HANBURY (for the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER): The term "broker" in the Resolution is only to apply to persons carrying on the business of a broker, and therefore would not have the wide application suggested in this question. The Bill itself will be circulated in a few days.

ESTATE DUTY.—PREVENTION OF EVASIONS.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what amount of duty he estimates will be produced by the new estate duty which he proposes to establish, in addition to the duties charged by the Finance Act, 1894, in respect of settled property, the life interest in which has been surrendered to the remainderman by the life tenant within twelve months of the death of the latter.

MR. HANBURY (for the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER): What I propose to do is not to establish a new estate duty, but to stop evasion of the existing duty by the process named in the question. I think, so far, such evasion has been rare,

because it was not supposed to be legal; and therefore but little duty has been lost. But the recent decision in what is known as the De Freville case has made it necessary to amend the law in order to prevent what might probably become a source of great loss to the revenue in future.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he intends to introduce a Bill this session to amend the law relating to the death duties; and, if so, can he state briefly the nature of the Bill and its objects.

MR. HANBURY (for the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER): No such Bill will be introduced, but certain amendments of the law on the subject will be included in the Finance Bill, in pursuance of resolutions already agreed to.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS—WOMEN'S OVERTIME.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what has been the result of further inquiry into the recent illegal working of women over hours in textile factories having contracts for the War Office; whether it has been found that the Bradford Trades Council are justified in their statement that the absence of inspection has allowed manufacturers working illegal overtime not only to produce cloth for Government purposes, but also for private sale; and whether, as stated, firms who could have executed the orders without illegal overtime have been passed over, and in the course of the last week not only women but also children have been illegally working overtime.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): Individual inquiries have been made with regard to all firms known to be working overtime on Government contracts. In a few cases it was found that the overtime had been used for private work, and this has been stopped. In one case children were found to be employed overtime, and this also has been stopped. The names have been supplied to me to-day by the right hon. Baronet of some firms who appear to be working overtime without the knowledge of the factory

inspectors. I will make inquiry into these, and take such action as the circumstances may call for. As regards the first sentence of the last paragraph of the question, I can only repeat that the selection of firms for these Government contracts is not a matter as to which I have any responsibility or information.

Craghead Colliery Fatality.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has seen an account of a calamity at Craghead Colliery, in the county of Durham, whereby a man named Robson lost his life, and another named Stenlake was seriously affected by the fumes of gelignite or foul air; whether he is aware that three miners named Cooper, Wilson, and Parnaby nearly lost their lives in an attempt to rescue Robson and Stenlake; and whether some arrangement can be made whereby the men who risk their lives in this manner can receive some national acknowledgment of their bravery.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY : Yes, Sir. I have had before me a report of this case, and may, perhaps, say that the accident was due not to fumes of gelignite, but to a sudden escape of noxious gas from the coal. I am fully sensible of the courage displayed by Cooper, Wilson, and Parnaby, and am sure that everyone will agree that it is worthy of cordial recognition. But I am proud to think that it is always forthcoming in greater or less degree when circumstances demand it, and I doubt whether any new national arrangements are desirable for rewarding special cases which it would be extremely difficult to select.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid) : Would it not be as easy to give the V.C. for industrial bravery as for bravery on the field of battle?

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY : The question of the grant of the Albert medal is frequently under consideration in these cases. I am not saying it ought or ought not to be awarded in this case. But it must be given under very rare circumstances. The granting of the medal has, in my experience, often given rise to many difficulties and heart-burnings.

Factories and Workshops Bill (No. 3).

MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether in the Factories and Workshops Bill (No. 3), recently circulated, the word "not" has been omitted by inadvertence after the word "which," in page 6, line 3.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY : No, Sir. The Bill is accurately printed. The object of the sub-clause in question is to extend the provisions which now apply only to new factories and workshops in which more than forty persons are employed so as to include factories and workshops in which substantial alterations or additions are made, but not so as to alter the limit of forty persons.

General Post Office Circulation Office.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he can now give a definite date when the removal of the circulation office to Mount Pleasant will take place; and if no definite date has yet been fixed, will he, for the convenience of the staff, mention the approximate date upon which the change will take place.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston) : Notices have been exhibited since the 26th ultimo stating that no definite date for the removal to Mount Pleasant can yet be fixed, but that it is expected to take place in April or May next.

Postmen's Promotions.

MR. STEADMAN : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in view of the paucity of promotion open to postmen, all vacant postmasterships and sub-postmasterships, not exceeding in value £140 per annum, can be reserved exclusively for postmen.

MR. HANBURY : The claims and qualifications of postmen who apply for any post office which is notified as vacant are considered with those of other candidates, and the Postmaster General does not consider that he would be justified in excluding other deserving officers of the

Department from the appointments referred to.

EDINBURGH POST OFFICE— SORTING BRANCH.

MR. DEWAR (Edinburgh, S.) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he can explain the prolonged delay in authorising the scheme for the revision of the sorting branch of the Edinburgh Post Office ; and whether, seeing that this matter has been under consideration for more than a year, he can say when the scheme of revision is likely to be sanctioned and given effect to.

MR. HANBURY : The new scheme was submitted to the Treasury a few days ago, and is now being considered.

IRISH LIGHTS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN : On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether a petition was presented to the Commissioners of Irish Lights by a number of lighthouse keepers on 27th November, 1899, requesting the consideration of certain inequalities of pay and arrangements ; whether he is aware that no reply has been sent to the petitioners ; and whether he can state if the matter is under consideration, and when a reply is likely to be forwarded.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon) : I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that they received the petition referred to in the question at the end of November, and that they are giving careful consideration to the various points raised therein. They hope to be able to send a reply very shortly.

CLONES POST OFFICE.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, what progress, if any, has been made with the new post office in Clones, for the erection of which sites were invited over three years ago ; have sites been offered ; and if so, why has none been selected ; are the Clones public still obliged to transact their postal business in the corner of a small general shop, under the same conditions as ten years ago, where privacy

is impossible, and where customers may overhear and observe all that takes place ; and when may a remedy be looked for for this state of things.

MR. HANBURY : The delay which has taken place in this case is regretted, but it has been unavoidable. A site which has recently been offered is now under consideration to see whether a new post office can be provided upon it at a total cost for site and building which the Department would be warranted in incurring. In the meantime the office is necessarily continued in the present premises, one half of which is used as a shop ; but, as already stated, no specific complaint can be traced of the particular inconveniences mentioned.

DUNGANNON WORKHOUSE—ROMAN CATHOLIC OFFICIALS.

MR. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how many officials, distinguishing between Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic, are employed in connection with Dungannon Workhouse ; and how many Roman Catholic, and how many non-Roman Catholic, pauper inmates are respectively in the body of the house and in the infirmary.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR) : With the exception of the chaplains of the workhouse, the Local Government Board have no information as to the religious persuasion of the officials connected with that establishment, whose appointments are made by the board of guardians. Nor have they any such information respecting the inmates. The hon. Member would probably obtain the information on application to the guardians.

BELFAST POLICE FORCE.

MR. MACALEESE : I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland has he observed that fourteen recruits from the constabulary dépôt have been detailed to augment the strength of the Belfast police force ; and is this movement intended to cope with possible disturbances in Belfast ; and, if so, will he say what restraining effect upon a Belfast mob the addition of fourteen recruits to the constabulary in that town could have.

MR. ATKINSON: It is a fact that fourteen recruits have recently been sent to augment the Belfast police force. There is no special significance in this step, as the hon. Member seems to apprehend, the men having been detailed for ordinary police duty to fill vacancies. I don't know the precise number of police who could effectually restrain a Belfast mob; I wish I did.

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, CORK—MEDICAL CHAIRS—ROMAN CATHOLIC PROFESSORS.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that there is only one Roman Catholic professor in the medical school of the Queen's College, Cork, it is intended to appoint a Roman Catholic to the professorship now vacant; and whether it is intended that this appointment shall be filled by a physician, as in the case of every other medical school in the United Kingdom.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): I have no information as to the religious denominations of the occupants of medical chairs in the Queen's College, Cork. As regards the remainder of the question I can only say that the legitimate claims of all candidates for the vacant chair will be fully considered.

IRISH ASSISTANT LAND COMMISSIONERS—MR. ROBERT GREENE.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that Mr. Robert Greene, of Greenlawn, Ennis, an assistant Land Commissioner, is also a land agent for several estates; is he aware that on the same day Mr. Greene was fixing fair rents he was also distraining in his own name through the sheriff's bailiff in his capacity as land agent and receiver; and will he take steps to stop this anomaly, and prevent Land Commissioners acting as land agents.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): This question has been referred to Mr. Greene, and pending the receipt of his observations it is desirable that the question should be postponed. Perhaps the hon. Member will repeat it on Monday.

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT—COUNTY SURVEYORS' SALARIES.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to recent proposals of the Irish Local Government Board for the increase of the salaries of county surveyors in Ireland and their deputies; and whether, in view of the serious objection taken to these proposals, they will be reconsidered.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): Where the duties of a county surveyor, or other "existing" officer, are increased, the Local Government Board are required by the terms of Section 115, Sub-section 18, of the Local Government Act, to fix the increase of salary proportionate to the increase of duties, in the event of the council failing to arrive at an agreement with their officer in the matter. The Board are aware that in several instances dissatisfaction has been expressed by councils at the award of the Board on the ground that it is considered excessive; but, on the other hand, equal dissatisfaction has been expressed by many of the officers concerned on the ground that the increase of salary is not commensurate with the increase of duties. The Board's award was arrived at in each case only after the fullest consideration, and cannot now be reconsidered, as suggested.

THE CENSUS (IRELAND)—IRISH LANGUAGE.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if steps will be taken in connection with the census in Ireland to obtain the same information with regard to the Irish language as is proposed to be obtained concerning the native language in Scotland and in Wales in the Census Bill.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): If the hon. Gentleman will refer to the Returns of the last census in Ireland he will observe that the information mentioned in this question was obtained and published. There is no intention to depart from the practice on the occasion of the next census.

ARMS REGULATIONS IN IRELAND—CASE OF MAJOR HAIRE.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he

is aware that informations have been laid against Major Haire for firing a gunshot at a man named Patrick Grue, of Kilturk North, near Lisnaskea, who has addressed the Inspector General of Constabulary asking that the prosecution of Major Haire be taken out of the hands of District Inspector Roe on the grounds, among others, that Mr. Roe went bail for Major Haire, and also went in company with Major Haire to obtain the evidence of a witness in the case, and has since been in frequent communication with Major Haire; and will he see that the prosecution in this case be conducted by the official Crown Prosecutor.

MR. ATKINSON: I am aware of the circumstances under which Major Haire has been returned for trial at the assizes, and that Patrick Grue has addressed a communication to the Inspector General of Constabulary in the terms stated. The case having been sent for trial at assizes, the prosecution will, in the ordinary course, be conducted by the Crown Prosecutor.

CONTEMPT OF COURT—CASE OF MYLES SINNOTT.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Myles Sinnott, of Courtown Harbour, was some time within the last five years committed to Wexford Gaol for contempt of court; what was the date of his committal, and what was the nature of the contempt; how long has Sinnott been detained in gaol; and is he still in custody; if not, when was he discharged.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): I am informed that the man Myles Sinnott was committed to Wexford Prison on the 17th October, 1896, on an order of attachment issued by the Court of Chancery for contempt of court. His contempt consisted in refusing to join with one Mary Sinnott in paying into court a sum of £850 cash to the credit of a suit, Sinnott v. Sinnott, and also in refusing to join in transferring a sum of £760 Consols to the credit of the same suit pending in the Court of Chancery. Sinnott was detained in prison until the 14th December, 1897, a period of one year and fifty-nine days, and on his discharge he was removed to the Enniscorthy Lunatic Asylum.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: How long was Sinnott under arrest before it was discovered he was out of his mind?

MR. ATKINSON: Only a short time.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: That makes two men sent to prison for contempt of court and afterwards put in a lunatic asylum.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: What limit of punishment would the man have received had he been tried for his offence?

MR. ATKINSON: I am not aware of the details of the offence.

MURDER OF HUGH THOMPSON NEAR ENNISKILLEN.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether he can give the House any information as to the murder of a man named Hugh Thompson, near Enniskillen, this morning.

MR. ATKINSON: Yes; I regret to say that a man named Hugh Thompson, who left Enniskillen about eleven o'clock this morning, was found murdered half an hour afterwards.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is it not the fact that the unfortunate man had given evidence in favour of an evicted tenant?

MR. ATKINSON: I believe the man was about to give evidence or had given evidence in a case of malicious injury.

RAILWAYS (PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS) BILL.

MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state when the Second Reading of the Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill will be taken.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am afraid it is at present impossible to fix a day.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state positively what the business will be on Monday; also, is it intended to take the Factories and Workshops Bill to-day?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As to the last question, I understand there are many Members on both sides of the House who would like to have longer notice of this Bill, and I shall not therefore propose to take the Second Reading to-night, although I am afraid that that leaves us practically with no contentious business. I hope that on Monday the Army Estimates will be taken. On Tuesday the first business will be the Loans Bill of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. When that is disposed of the Army Estimates will be proceeded with until the end of Vote 1. But as to that I must not be considered as pledging myself beyond Tuesday.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): When will the Second Reading of the Factories and Workshops Bill be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It certainly will not be taken before ten days. I will give all the notice I can.

MR. STEADMAN: When will the Second Reading of the Housing of the Working Classes Bill be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope to be able to take it before Easter, but I cannot definitely pledge myself.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Can the First Lord of the Admiralty say when the Admiralty Office Vote will be taken?

MR. GOSCHEN: Not for some time.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Lunacy Acts." Lunacy Bill [Lords.]

LAND CHARGES BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 118.]

LUNACY BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 119.]

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS (SUPPLY).

Ordered, That the other Government Business have precedence this day of the Committee of Supply.—(Mr. Balfour.)

POLICE RESERVISTS (ALLOWANCES) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I rise to move the Second Reading of this Bill, and I need add but little to what I said on its introduction. The House will recollect that in the autumn session it was announced that the Government were prepared to pay to married civil servants called out for active service in South Africa one half of their salaries. I was then asked what we were prepared to do in the case of the Metropolitan Police, and many watch committees and joint standing committees throughout the country also inquired what could be done for Reservists belonging to the constabulary. I said at once I thought it was right and proper that the Metropolitan and the provincial police authorities should be able to deal with these men on terms fairly comparable with the treatment of civil servants, and I promised, if necessary, to introduce a Bill to legalise provision being made for the wives and children of police reservists called out for service abroad. I have since found there is a strong feeling on the part of the standing joint committees representing the counties and watch committees representing the boroughs that power should be given to them, and in fact I understand that many of them have taken advantage of the promise I made of a Bill, in order to deal liberally with these cases. The object of the Bill, which I now ask the House to read a second time, is simply to enable watch committees and standing joint committees, and the Secretary of State in London to make a provision for the wives and families of police Reservists who have been called abroad analogous to that which is being done for the Government civil servants, who were in the same position and are now serving in South Africa. The necessity for the Bill arises from the fact that, under the Police Act of 1890, a police Reservist called out for permanent

See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxvii., page 550 (statement of Mr Wyndham); page 575 (statement of Sir M. White Ridley).

service is no longer a member of a police force. It is, therefore, not within the power of the standing joint committees or of the watch committees, as the case may be, to give any gratuities or allowances to the families of those Reservists while they are abroad. The Bill gives the necessary power, but leaves the exercise of it entirely optional. The amount of the grant from local rates is limited by the provision that, counting in also the allowances and remittals made by the War Office, the total money received by a Reservist's family shall not exceed his full pay as a constable. The general effect of this will, I think, be that the grant from the rates will correspond to that made by the Government, viz., half-pay. It may be more or it may be less in certain cases, but, at all events, it is, up to the limit stated, entirely in the option of the local authorities. I have had the most general testimony from the police authorities connected with the Home Office, and no less from the Scottish Office, that it is their desire to be able to make some allowance within these limits to the wives and the families of these men. The Bill is limited to a year—to this particular war. I cannot myself imagine that in any quarter of the House there will be any objection to the proposal, and I therefore earnestly commend the measure to the favourable consideration of the House.

Bill read a second time and committed for Monday next.

CENSUS (GREAT BRITAIN) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board did not introduce this Bill by a statement. I appear here to-day in some sense as representative of the Statistical Society. We approached my right hon. friend with a memorial setting forth our case, and I have great pleasure in acknowledging the readiness with which he complied with many of our sugges-

tions. I feel that I should not be in order if I were to enumerate all the points as to which alterations have been made in the Bill, but when I mention the fact that the vague term "storey," in the description of a house, has been changed to the word "tenement," I think the House will agree that a great improvement has been effected thereby. Then the date has been altered in accordance with our suggestion, and I believe that the change of date will tend to render the returns more satisfactory and of greater value. Another addition of great interest is the provision that a person not born in this country shall state in the schedule his nationality, for I am sure that that information will prove of great value in times to come in regard to legislation affecting aliens. I do not think I need occupy the time of the House by further referring to the new details, but I will make one general observation, and that is that the Bill, as compared with the Act of 1891, is more elastic in its provisions, more flexible, and much more easily adapted to the circumstances of cases as they arise. There is another point as to which I am bound to express my acknowledgments to the right hon. Gentleman. The Government have resisted the temptation to ask too many particulars. In the United States the census involved too many particulars, and that resulted in great inaccuracy and great delay in the issue of the reports, which consequently were not of that service to the community which otherwise they would have been. As regards the subject matter of the investigation, three things are essential. One is promptitude. You must have all the returns on a given day, or they are of no value. The next is accuracy as distinct from carelessness; for unless the questions put are of a simple character you may depend upon it that there will be a great want of accuracy and much remissness and carelessness in the filling up of the schedule. The third point to which the attention of the Government has been directed is that all information sought for should be such as that a certain statement of facts can be given. If you complicate your answers there will be great uncertainty as to some of the replies. They will consequently be less reliable, and the whole result of your labours will be of little value to the country. Having said so much in acknowledgment of the action

of the Government in response to our memorial, I must express my great regret that I should have to-day, as in 1890,* to stand up in my place in the House of Commons and deplore the fact that the Government have not seen their way to adopt a quinquennial census. In the year 1890 there was a Departmental Committee presided over by my right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin, and the Report signed by him is undoubtedly worthy of careful consideration. This Committee recommended a quinquennial census, and they gave their reasons for so doing. I should be reluctant to ask the House to listen to those reasons, but still I think they are of such a character that they ought not to be neglected. It was pointed out by the Committee that the change of population in this country in the course of ten years is enormous, and calculations which had been made by the Registrar General were shown by the Committee to be grossly inaccurate. I do not blame that high official. He, no doubt, has done the best he could with the materials at his hand. I find, however, in the Report of the Committee, mention is made of an error at Salford to the extent of 16 per cent., another one at Oldham of 18 per cent., and a third in the metropolitan district of West Ham of 25 per cent. And if this applies to these cases to such a remarkable extent we may be sure that the same would apply, although with perhaps less force, to other districts. That is not all. During the last ten years the discrepancy has, no doubt, greatly increased, and I shall be surprised if it does not turn out when we compare the estimate made by the Registrar General with the facts disclosed by the census, that there is a wider and more startling discrepancy than any which occurred on the last occasion. We have to consider that the population of the country is becoming, to use a phrase of the day, more and more mobile. The working classes move in search of work more easily from district to district, with the result that there is a great change of population in our townships, especially in manufacturing districts. Then, too, there is a great change in the areas of our towns and of country districts. The areas of Liverpool and Manchester have been largely increased in the course

of the last ten years, and I believe that in the case of Bradford it has twice enlarged in the course of the same time. These are reasons for a quinquennial census which, I think, are well worthy the consideration of the House. I do not desire that there should be particulars of every kind collected every five years. All that we desire is that we should have particulars of name, sex, and age, and I believe that such an inquiry could be conducted without any great expense. The quinquennial principle has already been adopted in London, and all we have to do is to make a similar change affecting the whole country minus London. If we cast our eyes across the seas, we find that a quinquennial census is taken in Germany, in Sweden, in France, and in fifteen States of America, as well as in New Zealand, Queensland, Manitoba, and in some of the most important districts of Canada. These countries differ as much from one another as they all differ from us, and yet they are all driven to the conclusion that a quinquennial census is desirable. I think the time has come when we in this country should adopt that great reform. It is said that the change would necessitate the creation of a census office. I should not myself regret that change. When we look at such public Departments as the Board of Trade, the Home Office, and the Board of Agriculture, we find that they produce Returns year by year relating to production and consumption. Surely if it be worth while to have a great Department carefully collecting statistics every year with regard to trade and commerce, it is not less the duty of the Local Government Board to accumulate similar information as regards the human beings who are our masters and whom we all serve. There would be another advantage from having a census office, and that is that it would be in continual correspondence with foreign nations, and it could keep us abreast of public opinion at home and abroad. I regret, and in this matter I speak entirely for myself, that there is an entire omission on all questions as regards the religion of those who fill up these schedules. We have, as is well known, questions on that subject in Ireland, and many foreign countries adopt the same system without, so far as I am aware, giving rise to any dissatisfaction. The Bill contains a provision of great value for securing absolute secrecy. I am glad of that, and, seeing

* For debates on the Census (England and Wales) Bill, 1890, see *The Parliamentary Debates*, Third Series, Vol. cccxlvii.

that absolute secrecy is enjoined by the Act, I do not think that any danger could possibly arise from including in the schedule question as to the religious creed of the person filling it up. I thank the House for having listened to me so patiently. I thank the right hon. Gentleman for the manner in which he has met our suggestions. I hope that success will attend him in his great effort to give us an improved census, for I am quite confident that enormous advantage will accrue to this country from the greater care to be exercised in preparing it. I hope, too, that we shall have the information promptly. It is a melancholy thing to watch the volumes coming out slowly year after year, and I hope, therefore, that my right hon. friend will take care to have an efficient staff, so that the information may be available to the public before it is too late to render the service for which a census is taken.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith): I should like to say a word or two in support of my hon. friend's desire that we should have an intermediate census, and I may add that I think it would be a good thing to have a permanent Census Department. The Committee which has been referred to was one of the most interesting on which I ever had the honour to serve, thanks to the ability of many of my colleagues and to the knowledge displayed by many of the witnesses, who included some of the best known authorities. Our recommendation was that there should be a census every five years, and although Lord Welby, who represented the Treasury, put in a memorandum, thereby exercising the tyranny which that Department not infrequently displays, the document did not present an absolute bar to our proposal, but it suggested that the Government should authorise an intermediate census in a district which might be considered to require it. I think that was a very valuable suggestion. There can be no doubt, from the evidence given before the Committee, that we are behind some other countries in respect of the information which is given by our census. I should like to know something as to the character of the enumerators to be employed, especially in England. We found at the last census that this part of the work was pretty well done in Scotland and Ireland, but that it was badly done

in England, because many of the enumerators were not reliable. I should be glad to know whether any security has been taken with regard to that. I believe some change is to be made in the manner in which the Scotch census is to be taken; but, as far as I can judge from the Bill, there will be no material difference in the procedure.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): That is so.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I wish to allude to one or two points. The first is the date appointed for the census to be taken. I think it is unfortunate that a Sunday should have been fixed upon for doing the work, as any other day of the week would have been equally convenient for the purpose. There is nothing in the law, as I understand, which makes it necessary for the census to be taken on the 31st March, and I hope, therefore, that in Committee the Government will consider the advisability of altering the date, for I am sure that in many homes it will be extremely inconvenient and somewhat distasteful to have to fill the schedules up on a Sunday. My second point is in respect of Clause 2, which directs the Registrar General to prepare and issue such forms of instruction as may be deemed to be necessary. I think that these forms and instructions—although, no doubt, they will be framed under the supervision of the Local Government Board—should be laid before Parliament before they are finally adopted. My third point arises on Subsection D of Clause 4, which deals with the taking of information in regard to the speaking of the Welsh language in Wales. Having regard to what happened in reference to that at the last census, I think it will be necessary in Committee to consider this clause very carefully. I do not say whether or not it is desirable on general grounds that such information—which, after all, is mainly of interest to Wales—should be collected in the census. All I do suggest is that it is necessary to carefully consider the wording of the clause. The hon. Baronet opposite lamented the fact that there was no provision in this Bill for obtaining information as to the various religious denominations in this country. I

think the omission is rather a subject for general congratulation. I do not believe there could be a greater mistake than to endeavour to obtain information upon such a very delicate point by means of the census. Subject to these general criticisms, I support the Second Reading of this Bill.

SIR E. DURNING-LAWRENCE (Cornwall, Truro): I also should like to say a word in favour of having a quinquennial census, for I hold that this country, through not having such a census, is dropping behind leading foreign nations in the important question of statistics. I think it is essential, too, that there should be a Census Department. At the present time we induce men to give up their permanent employment in order to do the census work, and at the end of two or three years they are dismissed and have no other work to go to. That is cruel to the men, and it does not redound to the credit of this country. If we had a Census Department, taking a proper and full census every five years, these men could be permanently employed, and the information would be collected and tabulated in a far better way. We should then get it more promptly, and it would be of enormous value, for it would enable our merchants to compete more successfully with foreign nations. It is worth while, perhaps, to remember that only one hundred years have elapsed since the first census was taken. The Bill for it was brought in in 1800, and it did not extend to Ireland. Seeing that there is a strong feeling among all who take an interest in statistics that the information obtained by means of these censuses would be of much greater value if we could have it more promptly and at shorter intervals, does not this afford an excellent opportunity to establish a quinquennial census?

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I would like to join in the appeal made to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill, to consider, even at the last moment, the suggestion made in regard to a quinquennial census—even if it is not such a full census made as that made

every ten years. Such a proposal was made by the Royal Statistical Society, and, as has been pointed out by the hon. Member for the Leith Burghs, it has behind it the recommendation of a strong Committee of this House, and a considerable body of municipal, actuarial, and sanitary opinion.

*MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I am afraid I can add very little to what, I understand, has already been said by hon. Members in reference to a quinquennial census. But as I happen to have been the chairman of the Committee appointed to consider this question before the last census, perhaps I may be allowed to say a few words to express the strong feeling of statisticians and all those concerned in watching the movements and health of the people, as to the necessity of getting an enumeration of the population at shorter intervals than ten years. That has been felt in so many communities that we are really very much behind the rest of the world in having only a decennial census. The matter is of great importance in consequence of the rapid changes that take place in industrial centres as to the growth of population. In these large centres the population grows up in consequence of the development of particular industries, and the ascertainment of new sources of wealth; and sanitary legislation and organisation in many other respects which should keep pace with the growth of population are delayed for many years. There were a great many false anticipations as to the results of the census of 1881 and in 1891, showing that most careful estimates which may be made by the Registrar General as to the growth of population, so far as that can be gathered through the births, deaths, and marriages of a particular area, are often very far out. The population is sometimes very much in excess of and sometimes greatly less than what had been supposed. It is really a scandal that on account of a little expense, which would only happen once in ten years, this important reform should be further delayed. What is wanted is not that absolute reproduction in a quinquennial census of the full census taken at a decennial period. We do not want to have so complete a return of occupations, trades, and the other data which are accumulated at the decennial census; but we do want

* In *The Parliamentary History*, Vol. xxxv., at page 598, will be found the speech of Mr. Abbott (afterwards created Baron Colchester), on the 19th Nov., 1800, in introducing the "Population Bill." Mr. Abbott gives particulars of "numerations of the people" made in very early times.

Mr. Herbert Roberts.

to have some check on the movement of population so as to be in a better position for social and political action than we are when this long period intervenes between one census and the other. I would urge upon the President of the Local Government Board the necessity of yielding to the pressure which is now put upon him, and which has been brought to bear upon him for so many years by statisticians, sanitary reformers, municipal organisations, and, in fact, by everybody in the community who takes an interest in the progress of the people, as to the introduction of this moderate addition to the census now about to be taken.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) : I wish to endorse the opinion just expressed by the hon. Member for West Denbigh. I think the Government exercised a wise discretion in excluding the subject of religion from the coming census ; and for this reason : a census of the people in order to be effective must be taken with the concurrence and goodwill of the entire population. The enumerators have difficulties enough to contend with without adding to them anything superfluous ; and if it were proposed to take a religious census we should enter on a bitter and exasperating controversy. Supposing it were adopted the issue would be that the inquiry, in a large number of cases, would not be answered, and ill-feeling would be raised where cordial assistance might be otherwise rendered to the Government. I hope the Government will remain firm in the attitude which they have most properly assumed. .

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) : I wish to draw the attention of the Lord Advocate rather than the President of the Local Government Board to one point. It is that the record is altered in form from what it was in the last decennial census. Hitherto there has been a separate Bill for Scotland, but in the present case there is only one Bill, and the Scotch census is put into an interpretation clause at the end of that Bill. There have been substantial differences in the way in which the census has been taken in England and Scotland. I daresay that these differences may be provided for under this Bill, but the right hon. the Lord Advocate has departed not only in this, but in other Bills, from what has been the

general practice on Scotch legislation in this House. The Bill immediately preceding the one under discussion was made to apply to Scotland by an interpretation clause, whereas there have always been hitherto separate Police Acts for Scotland. The police in Scotland are under the Secretary for Scotland and the Scottish Office, and although they are not put under the English Local Government Board in this Bill, there is a tendency to do so.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford) : I can assure the hon. Member who has just sat down that there is not the slightest desire on the part of the Department I represent to trench in any degree whatever on the province of Scottish questions. If the Scotch census has been included for the first time in the English Bill it is solely in order to save Parliamentary time in a session when less time than usual will be available for legislation. In regard to the particular clause by which this fusion is to be accomplished I must refer the hon. Member to my right hon. friend the Lord Advocate for any explanations he requires. My hon. friend the Member for Wigan expressed the regret which he felt that I had made no statement in moving the Second Reading of the Bill. I was under the impression that the Bill sufficiently explains itself, and moreover a statement was made on the First Reading. In all essential respects the House will see that, with the exception of the inclusion of Scotland, and of certain particulars suggested to us by the Royal Statistical Society, to whom I desire to render my acknowledgments for their assistance, the Bill is practically the same as that of 1890. There have been eliminated from the Bill of 1890 a number of what appeared to us to be superfluous clauses, which might very well be embodied in the instructions to the enumerators and give greater elasticity to these in carrying out their duties than would otherwise be possible. My hon. friends the Members for Wigan and Liskeard, and various other gentlemen, have called my attention to the desirability of having a census, not so complete and elaborate as that which is now to be taken, but still in some points of great importance, prepared quinquennially. I quite acknowledge that there would be many advan-

tages to be gained in that respect; and I am aware also that a course of that kind was recommended by a Departmental Committee, although I think I am right in saying they were not altogether unanimous. What I want to point out is that the introduction of the present Bill is not in the least degree in conflict with these views. The Government considered the question, and we thought, on the whole, that if a quinquennial census is to be taken it should be provided for by a special Bill in 1905. I have stated that I agree with a great deal of what has been said on the subject on the present occasion. The mind of the Government is perfectly open on the question, and the House is not to understand, because it is not included in the present Bill, that we, should we be responsible at that date, shall be precluded from dealing with the question when the time comes. The hon. Member for Leith Burghs says we are very much behind other countries in connection with the census. I am afraid it may be so in some cases, but not in all. America has been often quoted, but I have reason to believe that the census returns in America are far less satisfactory than those in this country, and very often very much more inaccurate. The hon. Member says that the returns are good in Ireland, better still in Scotland, but altogether to be condemned and very bad in England. I can only point out that the instructions which the Local Government Board are by the Bill empowered to issue will leave a very wide discretion to the Department, and if the charges made against enumerators in England are founded upon fact it will be necessary to make better selections in future. The hon. Member for West Denbighshire complains of the day selected for the census, both on the ground that it is fixed for March 31, and also on the ground that that day is a Sunday. Sunday is not the day on which the work will be done, but it has been chosen because it is a day on which the majority of people are likely to be at home. I am glad to think that, on the whole, the Bill has been favourably received, and I hope that on an early day it will be allowed to pass into law, because there is a great deal of work to be done in connection with the collection of the returns; and the Registrar General's Office is very desirous to have an opportunity of proceeding with the work at the earliest moment.

Mr. Chaplin.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton) pointed out that the sole reason given for the change in respect to the taking of the Scotch census was that it would save Parliamentary time. A Bill of this kind was always a non-contentious measure, and he saw no reason for the change being made.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY always understood that the counsel of perfection was to have measures which dealt equally with the three kingdoms. That was the whole tendency and desire of modern legislation. The only difference between England and Scotland in this matter was that in Scotland the names were rather different. A house in Scotland meant a tenement in England, but matters of that kind could easily be put right. So far from the Bill being a retrograde step, it was in his opinion a great step in the opposite direction.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

LUNACY BOARD (SCOTLAND) [SALARIES, ETC.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Motion made and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the number of the Staff of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland, and to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of their salaries, and of the expenses of the Board, and the remuneration of the Chairman and Commissioners."
—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): Would the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Advocate kindly give us some explanation of this resolution.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Butehire) explained that the Bill on which the resolution would be founded was purely formal. Unfortunately, in the Lunacy Act passed some time ago the salary of the clerk of the Lunacy Board in Scotland was fixed,

and a provision was made that only one clerk should be appointed. As the Department grew it was discovered that that arrangement was absolutely unworkable, and the present Bill was necessary to put the staffing of the office on the ordinary footing, so that such clerks as were necessary might be appointed with the sanction of the Treasury.

MR. CALDWELL understood that the object of the Bill was to remove the limitation imposed by the statute. On comparing the figures he found that the salaries paid to the Scotch officials were proportionate to those paid in England. Had that not been so the Scotch Members would have been the first to raise the question. But there was a statutory qualification in England not applicable to Scotland, and he hoped that the Lord Advocate would see that the men appointed by the commissioners should have the same statutory qualifications as were required in England. In regard to the other officials who were on the staff at the present moment, he said they were already provided for in the Estimates, and statutory authority was not required for making payments to them. There was no need whatever for an Act of Parliament for the purpose of introducing an increase of staff of a clerical nature. What was proposed, as he understood, was that one commissioner, who was unpaid, should get some pay now. In Scotland there were two commissioners and two deputy commissioners, while in England they had only six commissioners altogether. He had complaints from Scotland to the effect that when they wished a matter inquired into in connection with an asylum the commissioners sent down to the superintendent of the asylum to report. The commissioners did not go down themselves, and the result was that while they had a large staff they had not the work properly done. If a board required to get legal advice on a matter there was no need whatever for paying unpaid commissioners to give that advice. They all knew quite well that the salaries of the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor General for Scotland were given for the purpose of advising the different Departments in matters of law. With four commissioners already paid and on the Estimates there was no need whatever in the case of Scotland of increasing the staff of commissioners. So far as this would be a

matter of taking money out of the Imperial purse he had nothing to say, but he did object to giving the money to persons not qualified for the position. If they were going to increase the salary they should make it statutory that the qualifications of the men should be sufficient for the future.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) remarked that in regard to this matter the information was very scanty indeed, and he wished to know if any vacancy was contemplated. He thought the House was entitled to know. It did savour to him very much like a job, and he for one would not be satisfied unless they got more information about the proposal. As the Member for Mid Lanark had said, if the officer referred to had some status they might vote a large salary. He considered that they were entitled to know the age of this gentleman, and also the ages of the clerks whose salaries it was intended to raise. The Lord Advocate was paid £5,000 a year, and the Solicitor General £3,000 a year, to give legal advice, and if they considered that their salaries were not sufficient, then let them come and ask a rise of salary. They had no right to arrange for these unpaid commissioners obtaining fees. He should ask the Scottish Office to follow the example of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury a few years ago, to cut off all these allowances. He thought the sooner they were abolished the better.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY said the office referred to was a very hard worked one. The gentleman who held the position had been a most valuable public servant. He was qualified by a very long course of public service, and the Lord Advocate ventured to say that the gentleman had done more work in one year than the hon. Member the Member for Ross had done ever since he had been in that House. He thought the Treasury might fairly be trusted to do what was proper in this matter. This was merely carrying into effect an arrangement that had been made by the Treasury. It was not possible to give any more explanation than he had given. If the Treasury came to the conclusion that these gentlemen were underpaid, the only reason for not paying them properly was this statutory restriction. In regard

to the legal commissioners, he said that while it was the duty of the law officers of the Crown to advise the public Departments, the work of the Lunacy Department had so increased on account of the increase in the number of lunatics themselves that the Crown Office had had a great deal to do, and it was felt that they could not be expected to sacrifice so much of their time as they had been doing without a certain amount of remuneration.

*MR. WEIR said the hon. and learned Member had not answered his question as to the age of the secretary and chief clerk. He should like to know if they were on the eve of retiring on a pension. If these gentlemen are well advanced in years and about to take their pensions, has it been arranged that they are to get a larger salary in order that they may receive a larger pension?

MR. CALDWELL was surprised that the Lord Advocate should think those commissioners were in any sense overworked. In England they had six commissioners, and in Scotland there were two commissioners and two deputy commissioners, and everybody knew that the deputy commissioners did more work than the higher paid men. There was no proportion in the matter at all. He could not for the life of him see how for the amount of work it was at all necessary that they should have more commissioners. There were in Scotland at the present moment more than a half of the staff they had in England, and yet they had only a seventh part of the insanity in Scotland. He did not think that the Lord Advocate had made out a case. Apparently all that could be said was that the Scotch Office and the Secretary to the Treasury had agreed between them that the money should be forthcoming, and why should anybody have anything to say against it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) remarked that if the Scotch Members objected amongst themselves it might be that there was a strong case against the increase. He observed that the Lord Advocate and the Treasury had agreed. Now, that was very suspicious. He would expect to see them in bitter disagreement. The Lord Advocate had given no reasons that he could comprehend for the creation of the new offices.

Mr. A. Graham Murray.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY said it was not the creation of new offices.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Did I misapprehend, then, when I understood that the unpaid commissioners were to be paid?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY said it was proposed to give them remuneration.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said this quibble was worthy of a Scotch advocate. It was not to be salary, but it was to be remuneration! It was the creation of new charges on the people, and these new charges were to be paid in the name of remuneration among gentlemen who at present did not get any remuneration. Surely they could go on without remuneration. The number of lunatics had not so enormously increased. He certainly thought that a better case required to be made out. He had been looking in vain for Scotch Members to rise on this side of the House in support of the Lord Advocate, for when salaries were being considered there ought to be more Members present to support the proposal.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I did not think it would be my unfortunate fate to have to explain to the Hon. Member for King's Lynn such terms as "salary" and "remuneration." I do not wish to quibble about words, but what I said was that they were "fees," or "remuneration," and not salary. As hon. Members know, a fee is a thing to be given according as the Treasury may determine where a person has performed exceptional service or not. A salary is a fixed payment. I should have thought that there was a substantial distinction between the two terms.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES), 1899-1900.

1. £47,000, Supplementary, Ordnance Factories.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said he desired to know if there were any

penalty clauses in the contracts connected with the ordnance factories for non-fulfilment of contracts. If there were, did the contractors get off scot-free, or were the penalties enforced, and if not, why not?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): There are penalty clauses in the contracts. Whether they are inflicted or not depends upon the excuse which the contractors make. The hon. Member who has asked the question knows as well as any hon. Member in this House the difficulties which the contractors have had in fulfilling their contracts, owing to the difficulty of obtaining materials.

MR. WEIR: No, no!

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Well, if he does not know it I know it. Some of the contractors have failed to fulfil the terms of their contracts in a good many cases from circumstances over which they had no control. In some cases the penalties had been exacted, and in others they had not.

MR. WEIR thought, if the War Office would invite tenders from a larger field instead of tying themselves to a small number of firms, the difficulties would not arise. The War Office confined themselves to two or three firms, and when there was a rush of orders they could not get them out. He was sure, if they spread their orders over a larger area, they would have an unlimited supply.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: There are only two or three firms who do certain particular kinds of work, and, therefore, it is impossible to invite tenders from a larger number.

Resolution agreed to.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

2. £60,300, Additional Naval force for Service in Australasian Waters.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

SUPPLY [8TH MARCH] REPORT.

Resolutions reported:—

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £1,715,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Victualling and Clothing for the Navy, including the cost of Victualling Establishments at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901.

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I desire to call attention to the question which was raised by the right hon. Baronet the Member for North-east Manchester,* whether it is true that two of the transports to South Africa had been supplied by the Admiralty with beef pickled in 1893. I think the accusation that seven-year-old beef was supplied is a very serious matter, and what I should like to have explained is what punishment has been inflicted upon the people who willingly and openly supply this beef? Some officer must have been responsible for having sent this beef to the victualling yard. It was supplied by the Admiralty, and not by the contractors for the transports. As it is a very serious matter that this state of things should exist, I want to see that care will be taken that it shall not happen again, and that those responsible for it should suffer to some extent.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said he thought if it was necessary to take stringent precautions with regard to the inspection of the food supplied to the mercantile marine, it was equally necessary to prevent the Admiralty re-issuing old provisions of that kind. He would like to know how it was that this 1893 beef escaped the inspection.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): With regard to this particular beef of 1893 no complaints have previously been made with regard to it. It was landed from H.M.S. Raleigh, and after it had been surveyed by the officers of the victualling yard it was sent to the transport. There were only two con-

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxix., page 1414.

demnations in regard to this beef during the voyage of the transport. The remainder of the salt beef supply was landed at the Cape, and it has been surveyed by the Board of Naval officers there, who have passed it as satisfactory. I quite agree that we should take every care to see that no beef of an undesirable character should be issued to the Navy or to the transports. In this case, however, every regulation was carefully attended to, and in my judgment no officer is at fault in the slightest degree, and I do not think there is any necessity that any special order or direction should be issued in connection with the matter. I will look very carefully into the whole of this matter, and I can assure the hon. Gentleman that there is not the slightest reason to suppose that there has been any dereliction of duty on the part of anyone connected with the victualling yard. With regard to this question, however, I may tell the hon. Member opposite that it is not at all an unusual thing for seven years old salt beef to be in good condition, but the whole question of salt beef rations is now under the consideration of the Admiralty with a view to considering whether measures should not be taken to diminish the amount in the future.

MR. WARNER: Does beef that is seven years old require a Board or an officer to condemn it before its reissue can be prevented?

*MR. MACARTNEY: Yes, a survey. I have myself eaten salt beef which was a good deal older than that.

Resolution agreed to.

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £208,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Medical Services, including the cost of Medical Establishments at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £13,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Martial Law, including the cost of Naval Prisons at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Mr. Macartney.

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £92,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Educational Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £66,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Scientific Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £271,100, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of the Royal Naval Reserve, and the Retired Officers and Seamen Pensioner Reserve, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £3,004,700, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Naval Armaments, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

8. "That a sum, not exceeding £271,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of various Miscellaneous Effective Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

9. "That a sum, not exceeding £786,700, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Expense of Half Pay, Reserved, and Retired Pay to Officers of the Navy and Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Shall I be in order in asking the First Lord of the Admiralty upon this Vote whether his Department will consider the question of sending a ship from time to time to protect our fisheries?

No answer being given,

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND proceeded: I must press the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Admiralty to answer my question, and unless I get a satisfactory answer or some encouragement I shall feel it my duty to

take a division against this Vote. The sums of money asked for here are very considerable in respect to Half Pay and Retired Pay, and I take it that it is not an unreasonable thing that we should get some return for this expenditure in the shape of the presence of a warship to protect our fisheries. I do not wish to delay the progress of these Votes, but I think I am entitled to some sort of a reply.

*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member is going to discuss Retired Pay, he is in order; otherwise not.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I am giving as a reason why we should pay this money that in return for it we should have a warship sent to protect our fisheries.

*MR. SPEAKER: Upon those lines the hon. Member might discuss any subject he pleases.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: If the right hon. Gentleman does not think it of sufficient importance to give me a reply—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I should have to prevent the right hon. Gentleman from giving such an answer, because he would be out of order in dealing with fisheries.

Resolution agreed to.

10. "That a sum, not exceeding £1,123,600, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Expense of Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate Allowances, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

11. "That a sum, not exceeding £343,500, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Expense of Civil Pensions and Gratuities, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Resolutions agreed to.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. SOUTTAR (Dumfriesshire): I beg leave to move the Second Reading of this Bill. There is a great amount of interest taken in it not only on this side of the House, but also on the other side, and there is a general consensus of opinion that something should be done. The whole Bill is contained in one clause, which is almost word for word the recommendation which has been made by Lord Peel's Commission, both by the majority and the minority. That Commission was practically unanimous that the age at which intoxicating liquors should be supplied to children should be raised to sixteen. It is not necessary for me to give many arguments in its favour, because the infinite mischief which is being done in this country at the present time by the sale of intoxicating liquors to children of very tender age is very well known to hon. Members, and great mischief is done by such children going for liquor to public-houses. I know very well that the friends of temperance on the other side of the House are also very anxious that something should be done to minimise this evil.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I beg leave to move, "That the House do now adjourn." I think this motion is justified on the ground that there was an understanding that the House should adjourn after the Government business had been disposed of.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*The First Lord of the Admiralty.*)

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): I protest against this course being taken, and I do not think we ought to assent to this proposal. I know of no such understanding as that which the right hon. Gentleman has alluded to. The only understanding I know of is that the House should devote Friday evenings to Supply. If the Government, for reasons of their own, can appropriate Friday evenings for Government Bills, why on earth, at twenty minutes to six o'clock, when all the Government business is disposed of,

should the House be prevented from discussing a Bill of great importance to the social interests of the people? This Bill is founded upon the unanimous recommendation of a Royal Commission, and I do not think, under these circumstances, that I am not using too strong language when I say that it is little short of a scandal that the House of Commons should be asked by the Government to assent to this proposal to burke this most useful and most important measure.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: With what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife has just said I think the majority of the House will cordially agree. It certainly does seem an extraordinary state of things that, because the Government have had their business facilitated this evening from every quarter of the House, they should now wish to prevent private Members from proceeding with Bills of this kind. Does the right hon. Gentleman object to the recommendation of the Royal Commission, which has the approval of all sections of the House? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife has used the word "scandal," and I do not think it is too strong a word at all in regard to this proposal. I ask what will the people of the country at large think if they are obliged to read in the newspapers that, at a quarter to six o'clock, because the Government had done their business, they insisted upon adjourning the House without giving private Members an opportunity of dealing with this Bill. Certainly this session there has been no Bill proposed of more importance than this now before the House. It is a temperance Bill, and it is one which I do not believe those connected with the drink trade in the country would object to very seriously themselves. Are we now to be told that a Bill of this kind is to be strangled and blocked not because a majority of the House is against it, but because the Government desire to have a night off? I dare say private Members in this House are just as anxious to have a night off as hon. Members opposite, but it is a monstrous thing to say that the Government should come here and prevent those willing to remain to do some useful work from doing it because the Government work has been disposed of. Private Members occupy a different position to members of the Government. It is the duty of the members of the Government

Mr. Asquith.

not only to see that Government business is done, but to give private Members assistance upon occasions like this. So far this session private Members have had absolutely no opportunities, and a private Member might as well have been absent from the House altogether. The Government have transacted their business without consulting the wishes of private Members at all, because they have appropriated almost every hour of the time of Parliament since the session began. I hope, under these circumstances, hon. Members will oppose the motion for the adjournment, and let this Bill be considered. I believe a Bill which has for its object to prevent young children going to public houses, where they would probably learn to drink and become demoralised, will be passed by an enormous majority. I see the hon. Member for South Belfast in his place. On some questions of temperance legislation he and I have not always agreed, but this Bill I heartily support, and I appeal to the hon. Member, in the interests of the temperance cause, which he is always so ready to support, to oppose this motion. The proposition of the First Lord of the Admiralty is so unreasonable and preposterous, that I do not believe the House will sanction it, and if it does it will be universally condemned throughout the country when it is known that, instead of allowing private Members to discuss a Bill of this kind, the Government, having voted all their money, want to go off to spend the evening at the Empire or the Alhambra.

MR. TRITTON (Lambeth, Norwood): May I appeal to Her Majesty's Government not to persist with this motion. I do not know a more important measure than the measure which has been referred to, or one which the best people in the land more earnestly desire to see passed into law. Both the minority and majority Reports of the Royal Commission which was appointed by Her Majesty's Government to inquire into the Licensing Laws, and which gave three years hard labour to the subject, were unanimous in support of this measure. I can hardly imagine that Her Majesty's Government are going to burke discussion on such a Bill, and in making a most earnest appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury I can assure him that hundreds and thousands of the best supporters of the Government are thoroughly

infavour of this Bill. It is only ten minutes to six o'clock now, and we have an opportunity of passing the Second Reading of a Bill which will be beneficial not only to the present generation but to all future generations in the country. I most earnestly appeal to Her Majesty's Government, which is anxious to be known as a Government desirous of promoting domestic legislation, to give us an opportunity of discussing the Bill to-night, otherwise I will certainly be under the painful necessity of voting against the motion.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid): After the appeal of the hon. Gentleman, I hope the First Lord of the Treasury will see his way to withdraw the motion of the First Lord of the Admiralty. It is very clear that there is a general consensus of opinion in favour of the Bill. I submit this question to the First Lord of the Treasury. Their great majority was given to the Government in 1895 for a specific purpose, and that was that they were to devote their attention to matters of social legislation for this country. Are we to understand now that this great majority is to be used for the purpose of stifling a measure which touches the young life of the country, and would prevent children of twelve or thirteen years of age being sent to public-houses, where they would come under the evils and the vicious influences of the drink traffic? Will the Government, in face of the emphatic opinion expressed in this House, insist on the motion for the adjournment? The Bill can be discussed in about an hour. There is not any serious difference of opinion upon it, and it has not been sprung newly upon the country. The hon. Member for East Clare talked about the Alhambra and the Empire. I do not think the Government are acting from any such motive, but I think that they have not realised the great volume of opinion against selling drink to children. I make an appeal to the Government as one knowing the people of this country. I come from a great industrial centre—one of the most congested industrial centres in this country—and I know the feeling of the people on this question, and I do not think that the Government, if indicted at the bar of public opinion, can give any satisfactory justification for the course they now propose to take. I

appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury, now that he has heard the opinion on his own side of the House—an opinion which is strongly shared on this side—to withdraw the motion for the adjournment.

*MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I join in the appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury not to crush the first attempt made this session to carry temperance legislation with a measure which had the unanimous approval of both the minority and majority Reports of the Royal Commission. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to celebrate the Queen's visit to London by allowing us to carry a measure which is in the best interests of the Queen's younger subjects. I regret exceedingly to take up a position of even apparent hostility to the right hon. Gentleman and the Government, but on this occasion, feeling intensely for the cause for which I have been working all my life, I join in the appeal to the Government. I should regret extremely to be under the necessity of voting against the motion.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): I wish to associate myself with the appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury to allow this Bill to be proceeded with. Having served on the Royal Commission, I can say that, of all the disputed questions we had to consider, the practical proposal in this Bill was received with entire unanimity, and was supported not only by temperance reformers, but also by those who do not ordinarily work for temperance reform. It is one of those questions which appeals to every man. The Bill would prevent the degradation of young children in this country by removing the opportunities which they have at present of visiting public-houses in a way which I am sure no one wishes. The opportunity having accidentally occurred, I hope the First Lord of the Treasury will allow us to deal with this Bill. I am a little afraid Her Majesty's Government are not very active in bringing forward some of the reforms—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The only question is the adjournment of the House.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH: I will only appeal again to the First Lord

of the Treasury to give us this opportunity.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I need not say that I thoroughly understand the motives which have influenced my hon. friend who has just sat down, my hon. friend the Member for South Belfast, and hon. Gentlemen opposite in appealing to the Government to allow this Bill to go on. Their reasons are not based on reasons of procedure; they are based on an earnest desire that this opportunity should be taken to help to carry into law what they believe, and what certainly I am not going to deny to be, a great temperance reform. I am not going to discuss the merits of the Bill, because it is not in regard to the merits of the Bill that I should be disposed to support the motion. But the general convenience of procedure is a motive which should not be lightly thrown aside by hon. Members because of their predilection for any particular measure. It will be remembered that it was the desire of the Government that the Factories Bill should be brought on to-night, and if it had been taken I suppose we should have a long and interesting debate on it. An appeal was made to me by hon. Gentlemen interested in that Bill to defer it on the ground that they preferred a longer time to consider its provisions. That Bill also deals with the health and social condition of the people; it is, moreover, a measure of the very greatest importance, but we were appealed to by various hon. Members interested in it to put it off for some time longer in order that they might have a better opportunity of considering its provisions in detail. Why is the same justice or injustice not to be meted out to the private Member as was meted out to the Government?

*MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: The Government can take a day any time they like.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Bill we are now asked to consider came on, by the admission of my hon. friend, accidentally. Not a single hon. Member interested in the Bill yesterday conceived that this measure would come before the House of Commons to-day. I have my doubts whether of the ten or twelve hon.

Sir William Houldsworth.

Members whose names appear on the back of the Bill there is one now present.

MR. SOUTTAR: Four Members at least are present.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: They are Mr. Souttar, Sir Robert Reid, Sir James Haslett, Sir Thomas Gibson Carmichael, Mr. Herbert Pease, Mr. Whittaker, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Mr. Provand, and Mr. Douglas. I do not consider that on Friday nights it is for the general convenience of the House that these Bills should be allowed to come on without notice. That principle has been pressed on me by hon. Gentlemen opposite Friday after Friday, and I do not think it is in accordance with the general judicious conduct of our debates that we should depart from a rule which, so far as I know, has been universally accepted during all the sessions in which Fridays have been devoted to the purposes of Supply. The Bill itself is one whose object, at all events, everybody in the House would desire to see carried out. Its object is to promote temperance among the young, and I cannot conceive a more important subject; but, whether this Bill provides the proper machinery to carry that object out, or whether it is a Bill which, in its present form, ought to pass, is a question on which I am quite incapable of giving an opinion, because, like the rest of the House, I had no idea that it was coming on, and therefore I did not prepare myself for the discussion of the subject. My case is that, I am sure, of the great mass of those who are listening to me; it is the case of a large number of gentlemen who are not here, but who would have been in the House had they thought the Bill was coming on. Under these circumstances I should not advise the House to dissent from the motion of my hon. friend.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The argument with which the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House has just concluded his speech is an argument that would apply to any Bill on any Paper except the first two or three, which are usually Government measures, and which the House expects to come on. The right hon. Gentleman puts forward the best plea he can; but if I had any regard, which I have not, to any party

advantage over the right hon. Gentleman, I should very much like to go to a division now, and let the country see that we have, on the one hand, an opportunity of debating this undoubtedly useful Bill carrying out the unanimous recommendation of the Royal Commission, and, on the other hand, we have the somewhat pedantic and little considerations which the right hon. Gentleman has just addressed to the House. The right hon. Gentleman is quite right in saying that a Bill of this sort, in ordinary circumstances, is not expected to come on on a Friday; but who is it that has "un-Fridayed" this particular Friday? Who is it that has unfrocked the Friday? It is the Government themselves, not from any fault of their own, because I quite admit that we have no right to blame them for any confusion into which their business has fallen owing to the lamented illness of one of their numbers—the Member in charge of the Army Estimates. But the right hon. Gentleman having no Estimates which he could propose to the House to-night, took a stage of three important Government Bills, which was unexpected except for the very short notice given at midnight last night, and which could have had no effect on those hon. Members interested in these Bills, who had gone to the country for the week end. Surely, these small considerations to which the right hon. Gentleman referred, and which are out of place to-night, because, as I have said, the Government themselves have departed from the usual Friday practice, will not prevail with the House. I trust the House will take the advantage of this opportunity, which we hail with satisfaction, of passing a most important and vital stage of a measure which is universally accepted by all shades of opinion on the subject of licensing as a reform urgently required in the interests of young people.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): I am not one of the promoters of this Bill, but I most certainly say that I shall vote against the motion of the right hon. Gentleman, on the ground of the rights of private Members alone. I ask whether this session there is to be an understanding that private Members are to have no legislation at all. This is the second time this week that the Government have supported a motion for adjournment immediately on the conclusion of their

own business. The old practice used to be when I first came into the House that, if there was no Government business, private Members got the advantage. Why on earth should not private Members have the crumbs which fall from the Government table? At any rate, if this rule is to be laid down, let it be an open and well established rule. It was said that this Bill came on unexpectedly, and that hon. Members were therefore unprepared for it; but the proper way to meet that was to move the adjournment of the debate, not the adjournment of the House. This is really a question of the rights of private Members. If, as a matter of course, we are simply here night after night to register the decrees of the Government in granting them Votes in Supply, I for one, as a loyal supporter, would have been ready and willing to do so; but I do think that when private Members get a chance, as they have this evening, they should not be deprived of their rights and privileges by the Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If my hon. friend will allow me to say it, he seems to think that the action of the Government is directed against private Members. I can assure him that is not the case. We may be right or we may be wrong in the action we have taken; but we conceived ourselves to be acting as the guardians of the rights of private Members in taking care that a measure which private Members did not expect to come on should not be taken on a day when such measures are not usually discussed.

MR. HOBHOUSE: If this is the way the Government propose to protect private Members' rights, I can see that very soon private Members will have no rights to protect. There is another consideration. All of us have been struck within the last few months with the tone adopted by a large section of the press of the country in regard to the attitude of the Government to the House. I think that that attack upon the House of Commons will be to a large extent justified if we abrogate in this way all the powers of legislation by private Members. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that there are a large number of Members, even on this side of the House, who strongly object to the threatened extinction of all private Members' rights, and

especially the action of the Government in doing their best to adjourn the House the other night and to-night.

*MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): The right hon. Gentleman has taken credit that the Government did not go on with the Factories and Workshops Bill to-night. I do not think the Government can claim any credit for that; for it is a very large and complicated measure, and was only received by Members yesterday morning. I am surprised that the Government, which professed at the general election to be such advocates of social reform, should have blocked a measure of social reform by moving the adjournment of the House. This is not the first time that this has occurred, because on Tuesday last a very useful measure introduced by my right hon. friend below the gangway (Sir C. Dilke) was also blocked. I protest against the action of the Government.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I make a very strong appeal to the Leader of the House to give way in this matter. My name is on the Bill. I am one of those who had the honour to serve on the Royal Commission, and heard the evidence from beginning to end, and I wish to urge the strength of the evidence in favour of the single operative clause of this Bill. The House of Commons may well spend an hour in discussing a measure which will be of undoubted benefit to the community.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I oppose the adjournment of the House. It is a monstrous thing that such a large House as is present should be asked to adjourn in daylight, when there is a Bill before it for discussion in which so many Members are interested. It is a non-contentious Bill, and, from my own knowledge, the trade in Ireland do not oppose it. I may say without any disrespect that the First Lord of the Admiralty has blundered in moving the adjournment of the House. The First Lord of the Treasury is almost always happy in difficult situations, but to my mind he did not make out a good case for putting off the discussion of this Bill. I would therefore appeal to the First Lord of the Admiralty to ask leave to withdraw his motion, which I am sure will be given. After all, the discussion will not take so

Mr. Hobhouse.

very long, and the Second Reading may be agreed to on the understanding that the Bill goes to a Committee, where it may be improved. Probably some of the members of the Government want to go to some entertainment. If so, they can go, and leave us here to do the business of the nation. I appeal to the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who takes such a deep interest in temperance, to induce the First Lord of the Admiralty to withdraw his motion.

*MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): Hon. Members on both sides of the House have entreated the Government to withdraw the motion on the ground that this is a good Bill, but whether the Bill is a good one or a bad one is not the question. The question is whether we shall alter the procedure of adjourning on Fridays after Government business, a procedure which has obtained for the last four or five sessions, and which has worked well. It would be impossible, after Government business, to consider whether or not there happened to be a Bill down which, in the opinion of the few Members generally present on Friday evenings, was a good one, and therefore should be taken; or whether all the bills were bad, and therefore should not be taken. If the procedure is altered, all Bills, whether good or bad, must be taken, and the result would be that many Bills would obtain a Second Reading which ordinarily would be rejected. The late Home Secretary said the Government had "un-Friday'd" Friday. That is true, but it was done in the interests of hon. Gentlemen opposite; and, had the Factory Bill, which was to have been taken, and which also was abandoned at the request of hon. Gentlemen opposite, been proceeded with, the whole evening would have been taken up.

MR. GEDGE (Walsall): The fact that there are such a large number of Members in the House is a sufficient answer to the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. Without going into the merits of the Bill, which touches a subject of great importance and excites a great deal of interest throughout the country, I think it would be almost a disgrace to the House of Commons to adjourn at a quarter past six on a Friday afternoon, when we expected to be here the whole evening, and not to afford time to discuss

this Bill. If it passes the Second Reading, and should turn out incapable of amendment in Committee, it can easily be thrown out on the Third Reading. We should expose ourselves to the charge of cowardice if, having this Bill brought before us, we could not afford time to discuss it. It is always with great regret that I go against the Leader of the House, but unless the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Admiralty withdraws the motion, I shall be compelled to vote against the Government.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I only want to point out that this Bill is practically unopposed. [HON. MEMBERS: "No, No," and "Agreed."] There is scarcely a Member in the House who would venture to go before any constituency in the country and say he opposes the Bill. It is the manifest wish of the majority of hon. Members present that the Bill should be discussed, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will consider the advisability of meeting the wishes of the House.

MR. H. P. PEASE (Darlington): I would suggest to the Leader of the House that the question should be put to the House without the Government Whips taking charge of the division.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that my hon. friend's suggestion would be a proper one, for the motion was made by a member of the Government in my absence, and it would have been made by me had I been present. I wish, however, the House to understand that, while I give them the best advice in my power, it is not my intention to attempt to drive the House. According to my judgment the course pressed upon me is not a very wise one, and possibly there may come a time when the Leader of the Opposition would come to see that himself. The only wish I would utter at the present moment is, that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition will recollect that his view is that if a Bill is down on the Paper, even if it comes on in a most unexpected manner, there is no reason why it should not be fully discussed by the House. I will remember it.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That might be a very good reason for moving the adjournment of the debate on

an individual Bill, but not the adjournment of the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I really do not see any distinction between the two. There were two Bills which came on absolutely without notice, and the right hon. Gentleman thinks that there is no reason why they should not be discussed, and that he would take the same view, whether the Bill was a Government Bill or a private Member's Bill. I take a different view, and I only wish that the doctrine now uttered by the right hon. Gentleman from his responsible position will recur to his mind on some subsequent occasion when the Government is desirous of passing a Bill which, owing to some Parliamentary accident, has come on somewhat earlier than was expected, or on an occasion not anticipated. However, so far as I can collect the general view of the House, it is that they are so desirous of this particular measure that they are prepared to abandon the general principle of procedure which usually appeals to their minds. I do not agree, as I have said, but if they take that view I shall not insist on the motion for which I am practically responsible.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Motion again proposed.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): I cannot help thinking that this Bill, coming on without warning, has put some of us in a somewhat unfortunate position, for we have not had time to consider it, or to read the evidence of the Royal Commission on which it is based. Everybody will agree that it is wrong to sell intoxicating drink to children, but whether this Bill will effect the object for which it is intended I think is extremely doubtful.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.): I think the House will approve of the very few words I have to say. At the first glance this Bill seems admirable, but on mature consideration it appears to be less admirable. My objections to it are twofold. In the first place, a very large number of children under sixteen years of age represent themselves as over sixteen, and those who value truthfulness should not put temptation in the way of children to make them untruthful. In the second place, I wish to point out that this

is not in my opinion temperance legislation, but legislation to prohibit children under sixteen years of age from purchasing drink. Now, who sends the children to purchase the drink? Their parents. Who will fetch the drink in future if the children do not? Why, the parents. [An HON. MEMBER: Who will drink it? The parents.] Is it not likely that the parents will remain in the public-houses to drink, and that will not promote drinking at home? They will, therefore, drink very much more than if they drank it at home. It seems to me that an evil, which I recognise, is going to be superseded by an evil which, for anything I know to the contrary, will be greater. If I were a publican I would support the Bill, because more drink will be consumed if it is passed than at present. Hon. Gentlemen may say that the parents will send children for the drink who are over sixteen years of age, but I would far rather send a child of thirteen or fourteen to a public-house than a child, especially a girl, over sixteen.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I must admit that, like the rest of the House, I have been taken completely by surprise by finding that I am expected to deal with this subject this evening. As hon. Members very well know, the question before us is not devoid of difficulty, and is one which has occupied the attention of the House before. It was referred to a Select Committee of the House some years ago, and a Bill was brought before the House in a different form from that now before the House, in which very considerable alteration was made. I am told that an argument is derived from the recent Report of the Licensing Commission, where both the majority and the minority of the Commission agreed at all events with the principle of this Bill. When I look into the details of this Bill I am almost inclined to think that they go beyond the provisions which ought to be made. To say that children of fifteen or sixteen are not under any circumstances to be at liberty to fetch their parents' beer is going a long way in the direction of interfering with the liberty of the working classes, who would be the first to complain if this or other measures were passed hastily on the strict lines which

Mr. Middlesmore.

the Licensing Commission has taken. Although I regret I have not had further time to look into this matter, I may say that, so far as the Government is concerned, they will offer no opposition to the Second Reading of the Bill.

MR. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): I think the House would do well on this occasion to let this Bill go through without a division. We are all agreed that the sale of drink to children under sixteen for their own consumption is wrong, and it is quite possible that the Bill may be so amended as to condemn the sale of drink to children for their own consumption while not preventing them from fetching their father's dinner beer. If that were done the Bill might be a useful one.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I do not think that anyone will say that I would oppose any measure tending to promote temperance and thrift, but in a measure like this we are very liable to run away with sentiment and overlook the practical bearing of it. Are we prepared to say it is a crime for a working man to have beer with his dinner? If it is not a crime, can it be said to be a crime for him to send a member of his family to get it? You say it is a great evil to send younger children, therefore he must send the older ones. But it seems to me you are increasing the danger by making this age limit of the child sixteen. It is a most impressionable age, especially in girls, and in my opinion it would be far more dangerous to send girls of between sixteen and twenty, who are liable to temptations from which younger children are exempt. I am fully in accord with any measure to promote social improvement, but on this occasion I take the same line as that taken by the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, who, when some years ago a similar measure was proposed, opposed it on those grounds. I regret the heat which has been imported into the discussion, which cannot by any possibility be a party measure, and I am strongly of opinion that this change, if effected, will not benefit those people whom we wish to benefit.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he understood that in order to discuss this Bill hon. Members had been prepared to go to the verge of beating the Government.

No explanation had been vouchsafed from the other side in reply to the arguments which had been put forward, and in the absence of arguments in favour of the Bill he should vote against the Second Reading. Of course this was a well-intentioned Bill; every Bill was that did mischief. Intoxication was not the only or the most serious vice in the world, there were others which had more serious and material effects, and the Bill as it was framed might lead to serious evils. Of course nobody was in favour of intoxication, unless it were the Kitchen Committee, and he did not suggest that even they approved of it. If the Bill simply prohibited the sale of liquor to children for their own consumption he should be prepared to vote for it, but having regard to the vagueness of its language, he was not prepared to take that course.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): I cannot understand why this subject should take the Home Secretary by surprise, for it is one with which the man in the street is very well acquainted. Neither is it a surprise to the magistrates, or chairmen of quarter sessions, or the Royal Commission which inquired into the subject. If this question was put to working men's political clubs of all shades of opinion the unanimous answer would be, "Let us save the children from this temptation." Whether the age of the children should be fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen is a point for a Committee, but on the broad question as to whether children should be allowed to go into beerhouses and off-licensed houses, hon. Members will agree that children should be kept from the baneful influence of such places. There is another point. Intemperance, though decreasing among working men in poor neighbourhoods, is increasing very rapidly among the women. There is a class of women, commonly known as "soakers," who lose self-respect and put on slatternly habits, who are given to secret drinking, and who regularly employ children between the ages of nine and thirteen to fetch their drink at various public-houses. The result is that in some districts scores of boys and girls earn money regularly by fetching drink for these women, who would not but for the children be able to indulge their craving. By frequenting the public-house children mix in evil associations which influence

them in later years. I appeal to the House to revert to its instinctive common sense, and to pass a Bill which the Commission recommended, and which everybody interested in the welfare of the people has long demanded.

MR. VICARY GIBBS (Hertfordshire, St. Alban's) complained that the Bill had been sprung on the House, and said that although hon. Members had stated that everybody was in favour of the Bill, it was not in fact a good Bill. No age could be worse than sixteen for girls to go to a public house—an age when children were most impressionable, and most likely to be influenced by their surroundings. He also thought that it was a monstrous thing that the publican should be compelled to decide as to the age of children who came to his house. He was not in a position to discuss the Bill at any length, and concluded by moving the adjournment of the debate.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think that I ought not to accept that motion. The unanimous decision of the House to allow the motion for the adjournment of the House to be withdrawn is substantially the expression of a desire to continue the debate.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(Mr. Souttar.)

MR. GRANT LAWSON: The whole object of this discussion was to pass this Bill, which was supposed to be so short and simple. That being so, there is no reason to remit it to the Committee on Law. A Committee of this House is quite competent to judge the age at which a girl shall be allowed to enter a public-house.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I hope there will not be any disposition to press this motion upon the House. Many hon. Members on both sides of the House would have opposed the Bill if they had thought it was not going before a Committee of the whole House.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said that if the motion were accepted the Home Secretary would have an opportunity of considering the details of the measure.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY said that he hoped the motion would not be pressed. The general sense of the House was in favour of the Bill being discussed in Committee of the whole House.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

MIDWIVES BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): I need detain the House with but few observations in moving the Second Reading of this Bill. This is the only country in Europe where women, without being qualified by skill or good character, are allowed to practise as midwives. The present Bill has been carefully thought out, and its promoters have been aided by the advice of the General Medical Council. It provides for the establishment of a General Midwives Board, largely composed of medical men but partly composed of laymen. This Board will frame rules for the examination of women wishing to follow the profession of midwife; and there will also be provision for the registering of women now in practice, who can produce evidence of good character. Under the Bill no woman will be allowed to practise for gain without a certificate, which will be granted and issued by the Board after examination of the candidate. With this certificate there is coupled the further provision that before a woman commences to practise in any district of the country she must take out a licence from the local supervising authority. The county council is recommended as the supervising authority under the statute, with power, if need be, to delegate that authority to the sanitary authority. The general effect of this will be that some satisfactory proof of training and capacity should be given before a woman is allowed to take up the practice of midwifery, and that when she does begin her practice

there shall be control, wherever she is carrying on her practice, of the supervising authority. I know that I should not be justified in detaining the House further, but I wish you to consider what are the sufferings of the poor women in England from the treatment of rough, ignorant, and in many cases dissolute women, of whose former career they know nothing, and of whose qualifications they know nothing. Those who have been about among the poor will know the immense amount of suffering caused to the women and children by unskilled nursing. I dare say I shall be told that the poor law is strong enough. I have not been a member of a board of guardians for many years without knowing that this is not the case. When you consider the number of women who require attention of this kind, I hope the House will not reject this Bill lightly or unadvisedly, but will give it a Second Reading on this occasion, and allow its defects, if it has defects, to be considered in Committee. If it can be improved and put in a more workable shape, let that be done in Committee.

*MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I would ask the House to give this Bill a Second Reading. It has been before the House a great number of years, and it has had the support of several Select Committees. I believe the House will be doing its duty and attending to a great need if it gives this Bill a Second Reading. For some years the medical profession was against any Bill of this nature being introduced into this House, but I am glad to say that now there are unmistakable signs that the opinion of a great number of medical men on this subject has changed. Those connected with large working-class districts know how much suffering arises from midwives who have not had adequate medical instruction. Their medical instruction is provided for in the Bill. We have carried out as far as we were able the representations of the Privy Council, and leading medical bodies, as to what is desirable, and we have removed those obstacles which might stand in the way of the support of the public and of the medical profession. The right of friendly neighbours to assist in cases of labour has been preserved. We all know that in country districts there may be cases where a midwife is not within reasonable distance, and

where a friendly neighbour has to be called in to give assistance. That has been provided for, and has removed much opposition.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Instead of being fully agreed, I certainly mean to oppose this Bill as vehemently and persistently as I can, and I believe I will get the support of some hon. Members in the House, if not a majority. Let me acknowledge at once the persistency of the hon. Gentleman who has brought forward the Bill. He has kept me in attendance at this House while he has been attempting—I will not say to smuggle through the measure, for I recognise in him an honourable as well as an honest antagonist—but while he has been endeavouring to get this Bill through in all kinds of unseasonable hours, and without discussion. You have here an admitted evil, and immediately some ardent philanthropic reformer, conscious of the evil and deeply and honourably moved by it, brings before this House a remedy which at first sight may seem good, but which you will find on examination will aggravate the evil with which it proposes to deal. Nobody denies that there is a great deal of bad nursing in the country, but there is also a great deal of good nursing as well. I altogether take exception to the picture drawn by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Johnstone), and by the Gentleman who seconded the Bill, of the way in which women are attended to in their confinements. What happens in country districts is this. A woman is called in to a confinement as an attendant. But a confinement is a natural process, and usually is effected successfully. The picture drawn of the drunken, incompetent nurse is entirely the result of an imagination inflamed by philanthropic feeling.

MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE: I have known two cases this winter in my own small village, in which from no lack of sympathy, but on account of unskilled assistance on the part of friendly neighbours, confinements have been attended by most sad results.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: If this Bill passes you will have the sad results

multiplied by ten. If the Bill would diminish by 5 or 10 per cent. the sad results—to use the language of my hon. friend—then I would support it, and I would say it is a step in the right direction, but my contention is that it is a step in the wrong direction, that it is retrogressive and not progressive, and that it will accentuate and not retard the evil of which you complain. The hon. Member said there was a change in medical opinion in regard to the Bill. What is the proof of that statement? I have in my hand a letter from the editor of the *Lancet*—and everybody knows that that journal is the most influential authority of the medical profession—in which he states that a circular letter was issued to the medical profession in England with a view to ascertaining the opinion of the profession on the Bill. He received 7,250 replies, and an analysis of the answers shows that 1,547 medical men are in favour of the Bill, 640 are indifferent, while the remaining 5,000 odd are opposed to the measure. I think I am entitled to give that as a specimen of the kind of argument by which this Bill is backed up. What does the Bill propose to do? In regard to the subject of midwifery, medical education has made enormous progress during the past few years. There was a time when a midwifery degree could be obtained by any medical man. The midwifery form of degree was the last that a medical man got. But medical men have seen that it is most important to take up this part of the medical profession with proper training, and the result is that to-day a man is not entitled to take up midwifery practice unless he has a medical and surgical certificate. The proposal of my hon. friend is that women are to have three months training for the work for which a medical man requires five years.

MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE: There is nothing about three months training in the Bill. The rules are to be approved by the General Medical Council.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I have not read the Bill for a few days, but I understand that the Bill will only insist on women having three months training. What I maintain is this: if you are going to entitle a woman to act, not merely as a midwife, but to act as a fully trained medical practitioner—"No, no!"—I wish to make my statement in my own way, with-

out unfair interruption. The effect of the Bill will be to make a midwife assume the duties and responsibilities of a medical practitioner. I protest against that to the utmost. Ignorance is very bad, but half knowledge is sometimes worse. The inadequate training you give to these midwives will give them all the pretences and privileges of the properly qualified, and whatever safeguards you may put on it, the result will be that, instead of calling in a fully-trained medical man who has spent five years of his life in qualifying, the certificated nurse will be called in, and the results will be very serious. Another point is this. My hon. friend, and all those who are in favour of the Bill, speak as if confinement were a serious disease. It is a natural process which, if nature be allowed to take its own course, will usually be attended with successful results. Ignorance and interference may convert confinements into surgical cases in which incompetence will

destroy the life it is trying to save. One of the subterranean horrors of society is malpractice in these cases. I charge this Bill as calculated to increase malpractice by giving these women the right to interfere in cases of confinement, and in that way cover, under the cloak of confinement, what is really an illegal practice. I think this Bill is so unpopular, and opposed by so strong a body of cultivated opinion, that it requires a great deal of serious consideration, and for these reasons I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.) seconded the motion.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(Mr. T. P. O'Connor.)

The House divided :—Ayes, 56 ; Noes, 127. (Division List No. 62.)

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Allsopp, Hon. George
Ambrose, Robert
Anstruther, H. T.
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Banbury, Fredk. George
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. S. (Hunts)
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, T. Gibson (Kings Lynn)
Caldwell, James
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Charrington, Spencer
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donelan, Captain A.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)

Garfit, William
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
Heath, James
Hogan, James Francis
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Macaleese, Daniel
M'Dermott, Patrick

Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Strauss, Arthur
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.
Williams, Joseph Powell (Bir.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. T. P. O'Connor and
Mr. Galloway.

NOES.

Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. H. Henry
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Cameron, Sir Chas. (Glasgow)
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (D'rbysh're)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Colomb, Sir John C. Ready
Colville, John

Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorg'n)
Faber, George Denison
Fenwick, Charles
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Mane'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)

Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond)
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herb. J.
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Henderson, Alexander
Hobhouse, Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry

Mr. T. P. O'Connor.

Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
 Kilbride, Denis
 Kimber, Henry
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Crn.
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'nd
 Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
 Leng, Sir John
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Sw'nsea
 Lonsdale, John Brownlee
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 McCrae, George
 McKenna, Reginald
 McKillop, James
 Maddison, Fred
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milward, Colonel Victor

Monckton, Edward Philip
 Monk, Charles James
 Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Phillpotts, Capt. Arthur
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
 Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
 Renshaw, Charles Bine
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Round, James
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)

Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
 Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
 Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Souttar, Robinson
 Steadman, William Charles
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Ure, Alexander
 Wallace, Robert
 Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
 Wason, Eugene
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Whiteley, George (Stockport)
 Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Heywood Johnstone
 and Mr. Tennant.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. VICARY GIBBS: Anyone who has listened to the speeches of hon. Members opposite would suppose that a great many members of the medical profession were against this Bill. That is not so, because the General Medical Council, the Royal College of Physicians, and the Royal College of Surgeons are all in favour of the Bill.

DR. TANNER (Cork County, Mid): My name is down on the Paper against this Bill, and I desire to say a few words upon it. The leading medical paper in this country is the *Lancet*. That paper took a plebiscite of the medical profession, and by an overwhelming majority in England, Scotland, and Wales they decided against this Bill. There are a great many professed humanitarians who say upon this question that women are always better qualified than men to deal with women, even under most arduous circumstances, and that their strength would be quite sufficient to support the strain put upon them in such cases. This question has been taken up in France and Germany, and this measure is proceeding on lines opposed to Continental experience. I think it is very unwise in matters of this kind to absolutely put a half-qualified, or in most cases a wholly

unqualified, woman in such a position that she has all the powers of life and death in her hands in dealing with matters which medical men have to practise for at least four years in order to understand. By this Act of Parliament you undo all that has been done in the past, and in the face of the material vice that you have seen cropping up in your midst, not only in this country but in America, France, and other countries, you absolutely take away a controlling and guiding power for good that you have created through education. The whole control is now to be given to some uneducated woman. I heard the First Lord pleading against the small Bill about selling liquor to children, but here is a Bill dealing with human life, that touches the very essence of our well-doing, and I ask, are you really going to work this mischief? I sincerely hope not. I have never known a graver occasion affecting the interests of the profession to which I have the honour to belong. Speaking for the major portion of my friends in that profession, I should be unworthy of my position in this House if I did not raise my voice, however meek it might be, in the interests of humanity against this proposal.

MR. HAZELL (Leicester), who spoke amid loud cries of "Divide, divide!" supported the Second Reading of the Bill.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 124 ; Noes, 34. (Division List No. 63.)

AYES.

Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Baker, Sir John
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Charrington, Spencer
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colville, John
Cooke, C. W. R. (Hereford)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis, Fienes S. W.
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dunn, Sir William
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Fenwick, Charles
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manx)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finlay, Sir Robt. Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Alban's)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Greene, Hy. D. (Shrewsbury)
Gurdon, Sir William Brampton

Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hardy, Laurence
Hazell, Walter
Henderson, Alexander
Hobhouse, Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swans)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdonald, John Cumming
McKenna, Reginald
McKillop, James
Maddison, Fred.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milward, Colonel Victor
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrell, George Herbert
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)

Oldroyd, Mark
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Phillipotts, Captain Arthur
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Russell, T. W. (Tyronne)
Rutherford, John
Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Charles P. (Leigh)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Capt. Jn. (Forfarsh.)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Souttar, Robinson
Steadman, William Charles
Sullivan, Donald (Westmeath)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Heywood Johnstone
and Mr. Tennant.

NOES.

Abraham William (Cork, N.E.)
Allsopp, Hon. George
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Caldwell, James
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Galloway, William Johnson
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Goulding, Edward Alfred

Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hogan, James Francis
Kenyon, James
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Macaleese, Daniel
McDermott, Patrick
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)

Pierpoint, Robert
Purvis, Robert
Rentoul, James Alexander
Strauss, Arthur
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (York)
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. T. P. O'Connor and
Dr. Robert Ambrose.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: May I ask my hon. friend what course he now proposes to pursue in regard to this Bill.

MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE: I beg to propose that it be referred to the Grand Committee on Law.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Adjourned at a quarter before Eight of the clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 12th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—

Mersey Railway [H.L.].

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—

Plymouth, Stonehouse, and Devonport Tramways.

And also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—

Glasgow District Tramways.

London County Tramways (No. 1.)

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the

Christchurch, Bournemouth, and Winton Tramways Bill

ought to be dispensed with, provided that Sections I. and III. of the tramways proposed to be authorised by the Bill be struck out.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the

Muirkirk, Mauchline, and Dalmellington Railways (Abandonment) Bill [H.L.]

ought to be dispensed with and the Bill allowed to proceed.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the

Whitechapel and Bow Railway Bill [H.L.]

ought to be dispensed with and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that proof be given before the Examiners that the Bill has been submitted to meetings of the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Company and of the Metropolitan District Railway Company, convened in accord-

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ance with Standing Order No. 62, before the Third Reading of the Bill.

Read, and agreed to.

GREAT BERKHAMSTEAD WATER BILL [H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 2nd instant and Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed.

ASTON MANOR TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 23rd of February and Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed.

CARDIFF CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House, That the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

BIRMINGHAM (KING EDWARD THE SIXTH) SCHOOLS BILL [H.L.].

MUIRKIRK, MAUCHLINE, AND DALMELLINGTON RAILWAYS (ABANDONMENT) BILL [H.L.].

CORK ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to order).

UNIVERSAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [H.L.].

SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND AND LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [H.L.].

Read 3^a; and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ST. DAVID'S RAILWAY (ABANDONMENT) BILL.

The order of Tuesday last, referring the examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders to the Standing Orders Committee, discharged.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered—

That no Private Bills brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 26th day of June next.

Y

That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill originating in this House shall be read a first time after Tuesday the 1st day of May next.

That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 26th day of June next.

That when a Bill shall have passed with Amendments these orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended.

That this House will not receive any petition for a Private Bill later than Tuesday the 1st day of May next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the High Court of Justice; nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the High Court of Justice after Friday the 11th day of May next.

That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after Friday the 11th day of May next.

Ordered, That the said orders be printed and published, and affixed on the doors of this House and Westminster Hall. (No. 25.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Return for the month of December, 1899.

MISCELLANEOUS, No. 1.

Correspondence respecting the seizure of the British vessels "Springbok" and "Peterhoff" by United States cruisers in 1863.

AFRICA, No. 1. (1900.)

Correspondence respecting the action of Her Majesty's Naval Authorities with regard to certain foreign vessels.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 2388. Venezuela (Ciudad Bolivar).

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie upon the Table.

BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND.)

Return of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland and the

local courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1899; laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TREATMENT OF WOUNDED SOLDIERS FROM THE FRONT.

EARL CARRINGTON: I should like to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War whether he has been able to make any inquiries into the treatment of certain Reservists, to which I called his attention about ten days ago.*

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): I have made inquiries into the matter to which my noble friend referred, and I find that the information given to him was incorrect in some important particulars. My noble friend's statement was to the effect that the two soldiers whom he mentioned had arrived at their destination in a state of exhaustion, having been travelling from 7 o'clock in the morning till 5 o'clock in the afternoon, that they had had no food, and had no money in their pockets. I find, however, that these two men left Netley at 11.12 o'clock in the morning and arrived at High Wycombe at 3.58 in the afternoon. They had therefore been not ten hours on the road, but 4½ hours. The Principal Medical Officer at Netley has written to the War Office as follows—

"Both these men were in good health. It was very doubtful whether it was necessary to send them to a convalescent home, and I cannot understand why either of them should feel the effects of a 4½ hours journey."

With regard to the statement that the men had no money in their pockets, soldiers, when they are in hospital, usually accumulate a certain amount of pay; they certainly do so during a voyage on board ship, and men leaving Netley can apply to the paymaster for an advance. Even if no balance is to their credit an advance of pay can be made to them, and it appears that neither of these men made any application to be supplied with funds. Then there is the question of their clothes. My noble friend was informed that they had lost their kits, that they were promised that when they got to Netley their kits would be replaced, and that

* See *The Parliamentary Debates*. [FOURTH SERIES.] Vol. LXXIX. p. 1057.

they arrived at High Wycombe in the clothes which they had worn during the voyage. The rule is, I understand, that if a man has lost his kit it is replaced when he rejoins his battalion, and when a man goes into hospital he is given hospital clothes while he is there. These two men went from the hospital, not to rejoin their battalions but to a convalescent home, and I find that they travelled in their great-coats and serges, those clothes being no doubt the same that they had worn during the voyage. But before they left Netley each of them was given two flannel shirts and a cardigan jacket. Those articles were supplied, I believe, from the great amount of clothing and necessaries which have been placed at the disposal of invalid soldiers by the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association and by various benevolent local bodies and organisations. I am bound to say, however, that it does seem to me that articles of this kind, so far as they are indispensable and necessary, should be supplied at the public expense; but the authorities at Netley very naturally say that having received an immense amount of clothing they used it in cases of this sort. I think, as I said in this House the other evening, that it ought to be clearly understood that indispensable articles should be supplied at the public expense, and that if we look to private generosity at all it should be for the supply of things which are not absolutely necessary but rather of the nature of special comforts or luxuries. The result of my inquiries leads me to think that the arrangements for the supply of clothing to invalid soldiers on leaving hospital did require further consideration than they at first received, and I am glad to be able to say that attention had been given to the matter some days before my noble friend asked his question. What has been settled is this. In the month of February—the 7th of February was the exact date—the Principal Medical Officer at Netley was instructed that whenever an invalid soldier is about to leave the hospital, he is to communicate with the *dépôt* of the regiment to which the man belongs, and from that *dépôt* he is to receive clothing, either clothing which the man may have left at the *dépôt* before leaving England, or new clothing which he may be given and which he may wear during his journey from the hospital to the station at which his regiment is quartered. In the case of a

man going from hospital not to his regiment but to a convalescent home we propose that he should be given, in addition to the usual clothing, hospital clothes which he can wear while he remains in the home. I may, perhaps, be allowed to take this opportunity of expressing our acknowledgment to the many benevolent persons who have offered us houses of all descriptions—I might almost say from cottages to palaces—as convalescent homes for the accommodation of invalid soldiers. My only regret is that I do not see a prospect of filling them all. I am told that the private soldier when he is discharged from hospital very much prefers as a rule going to his own home rather than to a convalescent home, however comfortable or luxurious. We are, none the less, under deep obligation to many persons who at great trouble and inconvenience to themselves have offered accommodation of this kind.

EARL CARRINGTON: I have heard with great pleasure the concluding words of the noble Marquess, but in reference to the earlier portion of his remarks I think I must be allowed to say a word or two. The noble Marquess stated that instead of being ten hours on the road the men were only 4½ hours. I saw the men when they arrived, and they both told me they had been marched from Netley Hospital under the charge of the military police, that they had been put into the train at seven o'clock, not eleven o'clock, and that they arrived at their destination at five o'clock. I acknowledge that they were an hour late, but that was due to the fact that at the station for changing trains one of the men was too weak to get across the station in time to catch the train which was waiting at another platform. The noble Marquess said that men accumulated pay on board ship, and that these men ought to have had sufficient money to pay for their necessities, but neither of the men had had a sixpence paid to him since October and November of last year, and the country was in debt to them £10 each. As to applying to the paymaster at Netley for an advance, it seems to me that in a case where a man has been severely wounded in fighting for his country, and has been discharged as convalescent from hospital, the man should not be required to apply for an advance, but it should be the duty of the authorities at the hospital

to give him a portion of the money the country owes him, and not send him away, on what I still repeat was a ten hours journey, in a weak state without food or money. The noble Marquess admits that the underclothing was supplied from a benevolent fund, but the country will hardly agree that such men should be clothed by private charity. It seems hard that men, after fighting for their country, should have to rely on out-door relief. In conclusion, all I have to say is that I gratefully acknowledge the further consideration which was given to the treatment of invalid soldiers some days before I called attention to the subject; but I do not regret having done so, because I feel certain this is not an isolated case but an illustration of the condition in which convalescent soldiers were at that time being treated by the country.

*THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: I think your Lordships have something to complain of in the manner in which my noble friend has on both occasions brought this question before the House. On the first occasion there was no intimation whatever on the Paper, and he has again raised the matter without giving notice. It was only by the courtesy of the noble Marquess opposite that I knew it was coming on. When questions of this importance and wide interest are to be brought before your Lordships, notice should be given in order that the Secretary of State himself may be able to make inquiries before being called upon to answer them, and in order that any of your Lordships who are interested in the subject may be able to take part in the discussion. I am not satisfied with the way in which the noble Earl has accepted the reply of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War. The noble Earl made certain charges which appear to me to have substantially broken down, but he has not made any apology for having brought them forward. In its relation to Netley Hospital the statements in the question caused very great distress to Miss Norman, the able lady at the head of the hospital, because they implied that no care was taken to provide soldiers leaving Netley Hospital with proper warm clothing. The explanation of the noble Marquess shows that this was not the fact. The men were supplied with two shirts and a cardigan jacket each

Earl Carrington.

on leaving the hospital. That has been done since January last.

EARL CARRINGTON: From private funds.

*THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: The point whether these articles were provided by private funds or not had nothing to do with the question put the other day by the noble Earl, which practically accused the people concerned of not having taken sufficient care of soldiers leaving hospital. I contend that the noble Earl had no right to put such a question without first ascertaining the facts of the case and placing a notice upon your Lordships' Paper. I am very glad that it is now quite clear that Miss Norman is giving warm underclothing to the soldiers when they leave the hospital, and I heard with pleasure the words of the noble Marquess thanking those ladies who have taken so much pains in providing these articles. Miss Moreton, who is at the head of the clothing branch of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association for Hampshire, has been able to collect and distribute large quantities of clothing of this kind to Netley Hospital and Aldershot Hospital, and I believe that up to the present time the supplies have been adequate to meet the demands. At the same time, I quite agree with the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War that the supply of such things should not be left to private liberality and that it is the duty of the War Office to take care that these men when they leave hospital are provided with sufficient clothing to prevent any injury to their health. I understand that the noble Marquess is going to take care that in future that course shall be adopted. This is a matter of considerable consequence. Miss Norman tells me that 200 men left in one week and forty the next, and she expects 200 more men to leave immediately. The funds of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association are not in themselves applicable to soldiers, but to their wives and children. This special fund is now nearly exhausted and there is very little more money out of which such articles can be purchased. We have a county war fund in Hampshire, and we have a considerable balance in hand. We had a meeting of the fund this morning at Winchester, and decided that it was not right that a county fund,

which is raised for the purpose of helping those men who go from our own county to the front, whether Volunteers, Yeomen, Militiamen, or soldiers belonging to the county regiment, should be used in supplying articles of this kind to a great hospital like Netley, where probably very few of the invalids are Hampshire men. An individual who does not wish his name to be mentioned did provide a number of these articles so that the supply which Miss Norman had might not run out, but after those articles are distributed I do not think there will be any further funds forthcoming from the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association for this purpose. Therefore I hope my noble friend's arrangements will be at once made so as to avoid any difficulty. With reference to what the noble Marquess has said of convalescent homes, I hope that the regulations will in no way limit the comforts provided to the men who are to rejoin the colours, but that they will be equally open to men who are discharged from the Army. I was surprised to hear only two days ago that the Principal Medical Officer at Netley Hospital considers that the use of convalescent homes is confined to those who are going to rejoin the colours. I apprehend that no one who has subscribed to these homes would wish that men who have been wounded and are not able to rejoin the colours should be debarred from the use of the convalescent homes if they wish to go to them. I am very glad to hear that attention is being given to the subject of the way in which men leave the military hospitals, for I have reason to believe that the arrangements at Aldershot Hospital are anything but satisfactory, or, at any rate, have been anything but satisfactory.

EARL CARRINGTON: I feel certain the House will allow me to say one word of personal explanation. I did not think it respectful to interrupt my noble friend while he was speaking, but I think there is really very little between us. The exact words I used in my question a few days ago were—

"When they arrived at Netley Hospital they were provided with four shirts and four pairs of socks each out of the *Daily Mail* Absent-minded Beggar Fund."

I gladly add my tribute of admiration and respect to Miss Norman for the kindness she has shown to all the men at

Netley Hospital. All there is between myself and the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War is one cardigan jacket. He and I entirely agree that the men should be properly clothed and fed by the country they have so gallantly and so valiantly served, and should not have to rely upon private funds.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I share strongly the feeling which has been expressed by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War and by my noble friend behind me that it is the duty of the Government to supply soldiers who suffer in service with everything necessary to restore them to health. Private charity is a very valuable thing, but it should supply those articles which it is not reasonable to expect the Government to supply. The articles referred to are really necessities, and the whole nation would desire that they should be provided by the Government.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: With regard to the length of the journey, there is no doubt that these men left Netley at 12 minutes past 11 o'clock. What they could have been doing from 7 o'clock till that hour passes my comprehension. Lord Northbrook raised a point with regard to men discharged from hospital who are not going back to their regiment or to a convalescent home, but who are being invalided out of the Army altogether. Those men under present arrangements are supplied with clothes. As to the other point raised by Lord Northbrook, I will make inquiry. It was with surprise that I heard the suggestion that the use of the convalescent homes so generously offered to us was restricted to men who intended to rejoin their regiments, especially when, as I have said, we find great difficulty in discovering sufficient inmates for the homes offered. While I agree entirely with what has been said by the noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition, I think it must be remembered that in this case a very great quantity of clothing had been sent to Netley, and it was only natural that the authorities there should turn it to the best possible account.

*EARL SPENCER: As I have been connected with a good many of these voluntary associations I should like to say

that I am exceedingly glad to hear that the Government will deal with soldiers who are discharged from service after being wounded as well as with those who will rejoin.

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL [H.L.]
COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

LORD MONKSWELL: I should like to draw the noble and learned Lord's attention to a provision in the Industrial Schools Act, 1894, which seems to me to need amendment. The Act provides that every child sent to an industrial school shall, from the expiration of the period of his detention, remain up to the age of eighteen under the supervision of the manager of the school; and that in certain cases children may be recalled to the school for three months. This, however, can only be done in the case of children who have been granted licences. If the child is his own master he cannot be recalled, though it would be in such a case that the recall would be most necessary. I hope the noble and learned Lord will consider whether it will not be possible to amend this clause in his Bill.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I will do so with pleasure.

Clause 1.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I am anxious to call your Lordships' attention to this clause, which you will recollect substitutes the punishment of whipping on a graduated scale for imprisonment in the case of young children. I have been somewhat surprised to find that there have been communications to the press suggesting that this Bill is one of great cruelty and inhumanity, and treating this clause as if it were a flogging clause. I am also told, though I cannot say whether it is the case, that on public platforms statements have been made to the effect that this is an attempt on the part of your Lordships to flog the children of the poor.

Earl Spencer.

I hope I need not say that nothing is further from the intention of those in charge of the Bill. We do not desire to take any other course than that which would be most humane and free from any cruelty whatever. If we could we would relieve the young child from any punishment for crime, but that is a problem of great difficulty. If the Legislature were to relieve a child up to a certain age from punishment for breaking the law, it would place the legislation of the country in a very peculiar position. Indeed, I do not know whether it would be well for the child himself to feel that up to the age of fourteen or sixteen he could with impunity break the law. A practical difficulty would arise, for if you divested the child of any serious punishment, or of any punishment at all, you would find traders in crime employing children as their agents to pick pockets and other offences, and at the same time have the satisfaction of knowing that the child would not be punished. Therefore, I think it will be agreed that some punishment must be inflicted, but that punishment should be as slight as possible in the case of very young children. It has been said that even the punishment of whipping is one of great degradation, and that when the child returns to his home he will be a source of contamination to those with whom he associates. I hope it will be understood that this clause has nothing whatever to do with flogging in the sense in which it is generally understood. The punishment provided in this clause is not greater than many lads receive at public schools, and it is only the punishment which a child may receive in a village school, and which, so far as I know, has not been objected to on the ground of cruelty. I would ask those who say that whipping will degrade the child to reflect whether the degradation would not be far greater if the child has to pass fourteen or twenty-one days in a prison, and whether he would not be more likely to contaminate those with whom he associated if he had had experience of prison life. The object of those who framed this Bill is to make the punishment as far distant from cruelty as possible. The noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition called attention the other evening to the fact that a prejudiced magistrate might inflict eighteen strokes, which he suggested was a somewhat extreme punishment; but I would point

out that the clause provides a graduated scale of punishment according to age from six strokes to eighteen. If my noble friend and others think that the graduated scale goes too high in extending the punishment to eighteen strokes I hope full expression will be given to their views. I will confer with Lord Kimberley to see whether any alteration can be made. My object has been to state that nothing is further from the intention of the Government than to allow any cruel act to come into operation under the clauses of this Bill. From first to last the desire has been to keep boys out of prison and prevent them becoming habitual offenders, which is often the result of association with prison life.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I shall be very glad, when my noble and learned friend has given further consideration to the clause, to consult with him on the subject.

***THE EARL OF ELGIN:** I have had an opportunity lately, having been appointed by my noble friend the Secretary for Scotland to act on the Committee whose duty it has been to inquire into certain points connected with the administration of Scottish prisons, of hearing something on the point to which the noble and learned Lord has referred, and I can assure him that there is, in some quarters, a good deal of the feeling which he had described—namely, that the punishment of whipping, even with a birch rod, brings with it a certain amount of degradation to the boy on whom it is inflicted. I do not understand that magistrates who hold that opinion object to the punishment of whipping *per se*. Indeed, they state that if it could be inflicted by the parental arm they would have no objection, but they object to its being inflicted by the strong arm of a policeman in the police office. The result is that in some places in Scotland we are now face to face with the very difficulty which the noble and learned Lord has referred to—that up to a certain age boys feel themselves practically free from the penalties of the law. The magistrates have the same objection as the noble and learned Lord to sending these children to prison, and my noble friend the Secretary for Scotland feels that objection still more strongly. The magistrates feel that if they inflict a fine with the alternative of im-

prisonment the child knows perfectly well that he will not be sent to prison, and after a little experience he is apt to laugh in the magistrate's face, and the magistrate being unwilling to order whipping there is no other course open. The alternative which is presented in the fourth clause of this Bill—namely, that there should be some place of confinement which is distinct from a prison to which the youthful offender could be committed—appears to me to be the best suited to meet this difficulty.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Viscount CROSS): I should like to remind the House that the punishment of whipping in place of imprisonment has commended itself in many parts of the country, and has been in force ever since the Summary Jurisdiction Act of 1879; which I had the honour of passing when I was at the Home Office. I have never heard a single complaint as to the working of that Act, and I think myself it is a great matter to keep children out of prison by inflicting some small punishment upon them.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I rise to make a slight protest against the idea that flogging these boys inflicts a contamination upon them, and that this House is doing it exceptionally to the poor and not to the rich. My impression is that if you will examine the past record of Members of this House you will find that it has been very frequently inflicted, and that there is no trace of contamination surviving. I cannot understand why the arm of a policeman should be more contaminating than the arm of a parent. I am sure that, in the public schools of this country, it would be thought an odd thing if you had to send for a parent from a distant county in order to perform the operation of flogging a pupil. There is a great deal of silly sentimentality on the subject, which is not shared by the vast mass of the people of this country. It is only shown by a narrow section. I quite admit it is possible to carry whipping to a cruel extent, and all cruelty ought to be scrupulously avoided. On the other hand, you must not judge the effect of a flogging by its effect on the boy himself. The great value of flogging is to the people who are not flogged; the great value is the deterrent it offers to others,

who see what evil courses lead to. I can only say I should be as anxious as anyone to make no difference in the punishment of the rich and the poor. I only hope you will flog the evildoer as freely and with as little scruple among the classes of the poor as you have for centuries among the classes of the rich.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I have no doubt there is a great deal of force in what the noble Marquess has said, but he has left out of consideration the fact that in matters of this kind it is essential that the punishment to be inflicted should be one which would meet with the general approval of the class—I do not mean the boys, but the class to which the boys to be punished belong. We both of us know that in order effectively to carry out the law there must be behind it a state of public opinion which supports the administration of the law; otherwise what Lord Elgin has referred to is likely to occur. People feel—I do not say this is a conclusive argument against the Bill, but it is one that deserves careful consideration—and I know there exists a prejudice amongst the class to which we do not belong against this punishment. For some reason they look upon it in a very different light from what we do, and this must be taken into consideration. The problem is, I am aware, an exceedingly difficult one. It is obvious that we must all desire to keep little children out of prison, and that, on the other hand, there must be some punishment. The fourth clause, as I understand, deals only with offenders who are remanded, and I do not think Lord Elgin quite understands it. I desire that the punishment should not be too severe in its nature, particularly with regard to young children. If it is too severe you will not attain your object. With regard to older boys who have committed grave offences, if they are not sent for trial but dealt with summarily a light punishment cannot be inflicted upon them. I cannot help recalling a case which occurred to me personally many years ago in the days when there were no reformatories. In a village near where I resided a child set fire deliberately to a shed, with disastrous results, and the only thing the magistrates, of whom I was one, could do was to commit him for trial for arson. We thought it very undesirable to commit a child of ten, and we accordingly inflicted

no punishment at all except that of reprimanding him. This Bill would enable magistrates to deal satisfactorily with a case of that kind. I only wish to see that the Bill is not pushed too far, and I would ask those who are in favour of whipping to carefully consider the amount of feeling there is on the subject, and, whilst trying an experiment under this Bill, to do so in such a manner as will not raise prejudice against it.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I agree in the general principle laid down by the noble Lord, but I doubt his minor premiss—that this feeling exists extensively or generally. It is largely a local matter. So far as my own knowledge goes I think I may say it does not exist to any great extent. Probably every noble Lord could give you a different account of it.

THE EARL OF MOUNT-EDGCUMBE: Referring to the incident mentioned by Lord Kimberley, there is one way of getting over the difficulty which I have seen adopted, and which I have adopted myself, in the case of a small boy of ten convicted of arson. The bench of magistrates with which I myself am connected have adopted the course—I do not know whether it is in accordance with the law or not—of adjourning the case until the next petty sessions, informing the parents that if in the meantime the boy was punished by them to the satisfaction of the superintendent, who was to be present, no further step would be taken in the case.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: That is a very good plan.

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3:—

LORD REAY: I understand that on the occasion of the Second Reading of this Bill the noble and learned Lord viewed Clause 3 (liability of parent or guardian in case of offence committed by a child or young person) with some misgiving. I regard this clause with the greatest satisfaction, and I wish to give the noble Lord the assurance that he will receive the hearty support of many who know the great value of this principle which is at present wanting in our legislation. The

The Marquess of Salisbury.

School Board for London would like to extend the principle to those parents who neglect to send their children to school; but as I have noticed that my noble and learned friend considers that the clause as it stands is sufficiently stringent, and as I do not wish in any way to imperil the passage of the Bill, I shall not move an Amendment. I would, however, express the hope that the noble and learned Lord will resist any attempt to weaken the clause.

Clause 3 agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Return showing the names of Members of either House of Parliament at present serving, or under orders to serve, Her Majesty in South Africa, the capacity in which they serve, and the dates at which they sailed or are under orders to sail—Address for (*The Lord Windsor*.)

TRAWLERS' CERTIFICATES SUSPENSION BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to enable courts to suspend the certificates of trawlers convicted of illegal trawling; was presented by the Earl of Camperdown; read 1st; and to be printed. (No. 26.)

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL [H.L.].

House to be in Committee on Monday next.

House adjourned at twenty minutes past Five of the clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 12th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the

Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following case, viz.:—

Glasgow District Tramways.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—

Glasgow District Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—

London County Tramways (No. 1) Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

RUGELEY GAS BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

LATIMER ROAD AND ACTON RAILWAY BILL.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY (WALES) BILL.

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL.

NEWRY, KEADY, AND TYNAN LIGHT RAILWAY BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

WOLVERHAMPTON GAS BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

HOYLAKE AND WEST KIRBY IMPROVEMENT BILL (BY ORDER).

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): This is one of a class of Bills which I may call new. As the House is very well aware, for many years past we have set our faces against the enclosure of commons. We have gone so far as to pass several Enclosure Acts, which provide that whenever there is a proposal to enclose a common there shall be a local inquiry held under the guidance of the Board of Agriculture, and the public bodies concerned in the matter shall be represented thereat. But this session there are several Bills promoted by local authorities for the enclosure of commons, and I look upon them as attempted evasions of the law, because their effect will be to prevent any representation of the public at a local inquiry by getting the authority to enclose direct from Parliament itself. If this Bill had been promoted under the guidance of the Board of Agriculture, the county of Cheshire and the district council of the neighbourhood affected would have been entitled to be heard, as well as the Corporation of Birkenhead. But as the Bill now stands that corporation is the only authority which has the right to protect the public interest in this matter. Still I am happy to see that the corporation, with great public spirit, is petitioning against the Bill. I think it desirable to say these few words, because they apply equally to other Bills of a similar character, and I wish to beg the representative of the Board of Agriculture to interfere to protect the public in all these cases in which it is sought to give the go by to the Enclosure Acts. But I am very glad to tell the House in regard to this particular Bill that the commoners concerned, at a meeting on Friday night last, passed a resolution withdrawing their opposition to the enclosure of the land providing that a certain portion was set apart as a recreation ground, and I may add that the district council have accepted that condition, so that, all parties being agreed, and the public interest being protected,

it will not be necessary for me to do more than to formally move my Amendment, and I only do that in order that we may have from my hon. friend the Member for the Wirral Division of Cheshire his declaration, on behalf of the commoners and district council, that a satisfactory arrangement has been arrived at.

*MR. MACDONA (Rotherhithe): I suppose I am in order in seconding this Amendment, although I do not see, in view of the attitude of the proposer, that it will carry much force with it. But inasmuch as I have on the Paper an Amendment of an exactly similar character, I wish to take this opportunity of explaining that I oppose the Bill because I look upon it as an infringement of the rights of the public. It deals with one of the most beautiful commons in that part of Cheshire. From time to time the rights of the public have been seriously encroached upon, by commons in this district being enclosed. I think I have some right to speak in this matter, because I have resided in the neighbourhood for thirty years. West Kirby is one of the most beautiful health-giving resorts in the whole of Cheshire, if not in the whole of England; but what God has made beautiful man has made vile, for the sewage of the whole of that district comes right on to the sands in the front of this beautiful watering-place, and instead of people and children being able to bathe and enjoy themselves, the water springing back from the sands, from the mouth of this cesspool of sewage, is so foul and the stinks from it are so abominable that bathing has had to be given up altogether. I would call this Bill a death-trap, rather than an improvement measure. For many years people have been in the habit of going down to these sands to gather cockles, which are sold in Birkenhead, Liverpool, and adjoining towns. Is it not clear that, in consequence of the sewage being brought down to these cockle-beds, the germs of disease and death will be distributed all over the district, and many thousands of people may be made ill, and many of them die from poison? For these reasons I say the Bill is a disastrous one for the district, and likely to be productive of misery to great numbers of people who have been in the habit of visiting the place for recreation, because of its limited scope in not taking powers to deal with this sewage death-trap. Had

some such scheme as Scones', which works so well at Warrington and Eastbourne, been adopted here this lovely, life-giving health resort would for many years yet to come prove a benefit to thousands of people. I therefore oppose the Second Reading.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir John Brunner.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*COLONEL E. T. D. COTTON-JODRELL (Cheshire, Wirral): I rise to express the hope that the House will not agree to the Amendment of the hon. Baronet, and I do so with the more confidence because I understand he does not intend to press it. The only opposition that we have really to encounter is that of the hon. Member for Rotherhithe, who, although he claims to be a resident in the district, lives three miles from it, and on an altogether different estuary. He cannot, therefore, possibly be affected by any of those dreadful dangers which he foreshadowed in connection with the sewage question. I may go further and say that proposals are under consideration for dealing with the sewage question, and if only land is available, which is adapted for the purpose, a scheme will be promoted which will no doubt successfully deal with it. As to the present proposal constituting a death-trap, I do not think there is any more foundation for that argument than there is for the one the hon. Member advanced in regard to the sewage question, because the strip of land proposed to be enclosed is so small in extent that its enclosure cannot shut out any appreciable amount of sea air. It is, I believe, the intention of the urban council to adopt, as far as possible, the suggestions which have been made for laying out a recreation ground, but, speaking from personal observation, I must say that there is not sufficient land to be made into a public cricket ground, and that, at the best, it will only be suitable for boys to play cricket and football upon. I can assure my hon. friend that the council has agreed to settle terms with the Commons Preservation Committee, and that they are willing to give an undertaking that no technical objection

shall be raised to the appearance of that committee should it wish to oppose this Bill. I may also state that the six representatives of the district referred to by the hon. Member for Rotherhithe on the urban council were unanimously agreed not to offer any objection to the Bill. I do not think the hon. Member should object to the Second Reading of a Bill the object of which is to secure a distinct public improvement. Let him rather raise his objection before the Committee. This scheme constitutes a connecting link between two undertakings of a similar kind already completed, and will make a very long and desirable promenade road; it will also be the means of saving what I may call derelict land from the sea, for much has already been washed away, and if this Bill is thrown out I fear there is no doubt that in a few years there will be no common left at all. Under these circumstances I have no hesitation in recommending the House to consent to the Second Reading of this Bill.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER: I do not think I need apologise for having brought this matter before the House, because when such a scheme is promoted in Parliament this is the only opportunity on which an appeal can be made for the protection of the public interest. After the very satisfactory explanation of my hon. and gallant friend, I beg to ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

SOUTH-EASTERN METROPOLITAN
TRAMWAYS BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I do not think I need detain the House with any observations in moving my Instruction. The object of the Bill, which affects the tramways in South London, is to introduce a cheaper form of traction, and I think the House will agree with me it is desirable that advantage should be taken of the opportunity to try and get improved facilities for cheap travelling by the working classes. I understand that

the promoters of the Bill take no objection to the Instruction, and I trust that the House will assent to it. I beg to move.

Motion made, and Question, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to consider whether it is desirable to insert a clause in the Bill amending the provisions for cheap fares for the labouring classes in the company's original Act by the insertion of penalties to secure the object of the provisions in respect of the number of cars to be run, the hours at which the cars shall run, and the maximum and minimum fares charged."

—(*Mr. Lough*)—

put, and agreed to.

PLYMOUTH, STONEHOUSE, AND DEVONPORT TRAMWAYS.

Petition, and Bill ordered to be brought in by *Mr. Asquith* and *Mr. Kimber*.

LONDON COUNTY TRAMWAYS (No. 1).

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PETITIONS.

INEBRIATES ACTS.

Petition from *Hulme*, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO BILL.

Petition from *Streatham Hill*, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour, from *Wirral*; and *Bethesda*; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from *Bedwellty* (two); *Reading*; *Tredegar*; *Nantyglo*; *Blaina*; and *Berkshire*; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from *Northwich*, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petition in favour, from *West Hartlepool* (two); *Abertillery* (three); *Aberbeag* (three); *London* (two); *Varteg Hill* (four); *Northwich*; *Varteg*; *Manchester*; *Southampton*; *Tredegar*; *Guis-*

Mr. Lough

borough; *Hartlepool*; *Garndiffaith* (two); *Reading*; *Llanhilleth*; *Bedwellty*; *Sninton*; *Nottingham*; *Abergavenny*; *Berkshire*; *Coventry* (three); and *Beaufort*; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petition from *East Alseford*, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 27th February; *Mr. Howell*]; to lie upon the Table.

AFRICA (No. 1, 1900).

Copy presented, of Correspondence respecting the action of Her Majesty's Naval Authorities with regard to certain Foreign Vessels [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

"SPRINGBOK" AND "PETERHOFF" (SEIZURE) (MISCELLANEOUS, No. 1, 1900).

Copy presented, of Correspondence respecting the seizure of the British vessels "*Springbok*" and "*Peterhoff*" by United States Cruisers in 1863 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2388 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Inquiry into Charities (County of *Montgomery*).—Return relative thereto [ordered 14th February; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 93.]

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—OVERTURES BY THE REPUBLICS FOR PEACE.

MR. H. S. FOSTER (*Suffolk, Lowestoft*): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a question of which I gave him private notice—namely, whether he is able consistently with the public interest to state to the House the essential conditions upon which Her Majesty's Government will alone entertain any

peace proposal in connection with the present war in South Africa.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Papers on this subject will very shortly be laid before the House.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there is any foundation for the report that President Kruger has addressed any communication to the Government suggesting terms of peace?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already stated that Papers will be laid on the Table very shortly.

MARTIAL LAW IN CAPE COLONY.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state in which districts of Cape Colony martial law has been proclaimed; and whether any record is kept of proceedings taken against persons or property under powers purporting to have been given by such proclamation.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): Martial law has been proclaimed in the following districts of the Cape Colony:—On October 16th, 1899, in Mafeking, Vryburg, Taung, Barkly West, Kimberley, and Herbert; on 3rd November, 1899, at the military stations at Orange River Railway Bridge and at De Aar; on 15th November, 1899, in Molteno, Colesberg, Steynsburg, Albert, Aliwal North, Wodehouse, Glen Grey, Queenstown, and Cathcart; on 16th November, 1899, in Hay; on 15th January, in Philipstown and Hopetown; on 5th March, in Prieska, Kenhardt, Britstown, and Barkly East. In reply to the last paragraph, I have to say that the military officers have been instructed to furnish a record of any such proceedings as are referred to.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: Has the proclamation been withdrawn in any district yet?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Not that I am aware of.

DUTCH SUSPECTS.

DR. TANNER (Cork County, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies how many Cape Colonists of Dutch extraction being English subjects were arrested, and are lying in the gaols of Cape Colony and Natal, against whom no charge has been made, and who are denied the right of communicating with their legal advisers.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir Alfred Milner informs me that he has ascertained from the military authorities that all persons arrested are duly charged and their cases investigated as soon as possible, that the right of communicating with their legal advisers is not denied to any British subjects, and that every facility is given for their defence. The Governor of Natal informs me that in that colony eight colonists of Dutch extraction have been arrested under martial law and are now in gaol. Charges are pending against all of these except one, against whom no specific charge has yet been formulated. None have been denied the right of communication with legal advisers; on the contrary, full facilities have been given to such as desired it.

RULES OF THE WAR—ALLEGED BOER MALPRACTICES—TREATMENT OF COLONIAL PRISONERS.

MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether there is any official information to the effect that the Boers during the siege of Ladysmith or elsewhere attempted to contaminate the water supply by deleterious matter; whether our South African troopers taken prisoners of war are worse treated than those of the rest of the army; and whether, if so, the Government are doing anything and what to ensure their proper treatment as prisoners of war.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.) (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The report referred to in the first paragraph has reached us from official sources, but no proof of its correctness has been received. As regards the second paragraph there is some evidence to show that our South African troopers taken prisoners of war are worse treated than those of the rest of the army. We are endeavouring to ascertain whether

these statements are accurate, with a view to further action, if necessary.

TROOPS FROM AUSTRALASIA.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state the number of mounted men sent or about to be sent from Australia and New Zealand for service in South Africa, specifying at whose cost they have been or will be sent, and giving particulars with reference thereto.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The Australian colonies and New Zealand have sent about 4,000 men at their own cost. More will be provided at the charge of the Imperial Government.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: The hon. Gentleman has not answered my question. I want to know the number of mounted men about to be sent from Australia and New Zealand respectively.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The Secretary of State does not consider it desirable to give further details on this point.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has telegraphed to Australia that the new Australian force would receive pay to the extent of 1s. 2d. per day while serving in Cape Colony and Natal, and 5s. per day while serving elsewhere; and whether he can state where besides Natal and Cape Colony it is intended to use these troops.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg at the same time to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has telegraphed to the Australian Premiers stating that the new Australian contingent will receive 1s. 2d. a day while serving in Cape Colony and Natal, and 5s. a day while serving elsewhere; and, if so, in what other country besides Cape Colony and Natal, or in what military operations other than those of the present war, it is intended to employ these forces.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: In answer to the first part of the question, I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Financial Secretary to

the War Office to a similar question on Thursday last.* The force will be paid at ordinary Imperial rates with, in certain circumstances, special local allowances which will make their pay up to 5s. per day. The force will be employed in any part of South Africa which the Commander-in-Chief may consider desirable in connection with the present war. This answer applies also to the question of the hon. Member for East Aberdeenshire.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman indicate the circumstances which would raise the pay to 5s.?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Climate would be one.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Would not the circumstances of climate also apply to the British and Irish soldiers, and raise their pay to 5s. per man?

[No answer was given.]

MR. BUCHANAN: Are we to understand that this contingent can be employed except in South Africa?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It is only engaged for service in South Africa.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is it not a fact that the circumstance of climate affects the Australian troops much less than the British troops?

[No answer was given.]

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: You give them 5s. a day, and Tommy Atkins only 1s. It's a swindle!

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can conveniently state the number of men furnished by each of the colonies, respectively, to our forces in the Transvaal.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The numbers are approximately as follows:—Cape Colony, 15,000; Natal, 7,000; Canada, 2,820; Ceylon, 130; New South Wales, 1,800; Queensland, 810; South Australia, 340; West Australia, 230; Victoria, 500; Tasmania, 180; New Zealand, 730;

* See p. 372 of this Volume.

India, 250—total, 29,790. Further contingents are being raised in Australia and New Zealand.

FRENCH MEDICAL AID FOR BRITISH WOUNDED.

MR. HAZELL (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the French Society for affording Aid to the Wounded has sent from Paris forty-five cases of instruments, medicaments, and other useful articles for the use of our hospitals in the front in South Africa; and, if so, whether some public recognition will be accorded to the society for its gifts.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Yes, Sir; Lord Wantage, the chairman of the Central British Red Cross Committee, accepted the offer in fitting terms, and notified the gift to the public press at the time.

KIMBERLEY MINES.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the distress prevailing among the mining employees of the various companies in and around Kimberley, he will instruct the Government representatives at the South African ports, more particularly Port Elizabeth, to give all possible facilities for the prompt forwarding by rail to Kimberley of any parts of mining machinery, necessary to replace the damage which has been occasioned during the Boer invasion, in order that mining operations may be restarted at the earliest possible moment.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Such instructions cannot be given, as the military authorities must have the full use of the railways.

ARMY ESTIMATES—VOTE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL FORCES.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will fully explain in his statement on the Estimates the item, Vote 1, F. (a), of £3,000,000 for pay of South African local forces, or will give the details by a Return or in reply to a question.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: My hon. friend the Under Secretary of State

will give the explanation in his statement on the Estimates.

AMBULANCE WAGONS.

MR. HEDDERWICK: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the statement that the ambulance wagons attached to our forces in the field are in many respects inferior to those of the Boers, and whether the British ambulance wagons are without springs and, in consequence, are liable to jolt considerably, are so heavy in their build as to require ten mules to draw one wagon, and are so constructed as to provide accommodation for only two wounded men in a recumbent position in each wagon, as against eight in the case of the Boer wagon; and, if so, whether he will consider the propriety of taking steps to secure in future an ambulance wagon of a design better adapted for the requirements of the field, and less likely to inflict unnecessary pain upon wounded men.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The British ambulance wagon has excellent springs, and in the Long Valley at Aldershot can be drawn by a pair of horses. It accommodates either two men on stretchers and four seated, or twelve seated. It contrasts favourably with the ambulance wagon of any European nation. Nothing is known of the construction of the Boer wagons. No complaints of the British wagon have been received at the War Office from South Africa.

THE NEW "IRISH GUARDS."

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in the event of the Queen sanctioning the raising of a regiment of Irish Guards, the Secretary of State will consider the advisability of forming such regiment, in the first case, from soldiers selected from the Irish battalions now serving in the field.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): In answer to the hon. Member, I have to say that the mode of raising the regiment has not yet been determined.

BEVERAGES FOR TEMPERANCE SOLDIERS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State

for War whether he is aware that amongst the troops in South Africa there are many temperance men ; and in view of the fact that after exceptional exposure to the weather rum is the only beverage offered to the troops, will arrangements be made so that some non-intoxicant beverage may on such occasions be available for abstainers.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM) : The Secretary of State has no doubt that Lord Roberts makes every arrangement possible for the temperance men amongst the troops.

VOLUNTEERS—REJECTED APPLICANTS FOR ACTIVE SERVICE.

MR. WEIR : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will state the number of Volunteers who submitted themselves to medical examination prior to service in South Africa, and the number rejected owing to physical disabilities.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM) : No Returns are available.

IMPERIAL YEOMANRY — EMBARKATION STATISTICS—NON-PROVISION OF HORSES.

MR. STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can state the number of companies of Imperial Yeomanry that have been formed, the names of the regiments and of the counties from which each company has been raised, the number that have embarked with horses, and the number that have left either wholly or partially without horses, together with the names of their companies ; and whether this departure without horses was with the knowledge and sanction of the War Office.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM) : I shall be happy to show the names and figures to the hon. Member, but they are too long to give in reply to a question. The reply to the second paragraph is in the affirmative.

VOLUNTEERS—LANCASHIRE FUSILIERS.

MR. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he is aware that the service company of the three Volunteer battalions of the Lancashire Volunteers

has been in barracks for upwards of five weeks ; and if he will state when, inasmuch as it is fully equipped, it will embark.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM) : Information was only received on the 26th ultimo that the company was ready to embark. Companies have been detailed to ships in strict order according to notification of readiness. This company will embark on the "Tagus" about the 16th instant from Southampton.

VICTORIA CROSS REGULATIONS.

MR. ALLHUSEN (Salisbury) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can state the principles which govern the recommendation of a soldier for the Victoria Cross ; and whether the fact that an act of gallantry has been performed by a soldier in pursuance of orders and not on his own initiative precludes a general from recommending him for this decoration.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM) : The qualification for the Victoria Cross is defined by Royal Warrant to be—"Conspicuous bravery or devotion to the country in the presence of the enemy." There is nothing in this to preclude the Cross being given for an act done in pursuance of orders. The recommendation must, however, come from the officer in command, who must judge whether the act is such as, in his opinion, to merit the Cross.

MILITIA OFFICERS ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

MR. BARNES (Kent, Faversham) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is intended to make supernumerary all Militia officers who have been taken away from their regiments and given appointments in, or sent on duty to South Africa, and to fill the vacancies caused by that seconding.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM) : Yes, Sir.

TRANSPORT—IMPERIAL YEOMANRY— EMBARKATION OF 52ND COMPANY.

MR. H. S. FOSTER : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he is now able to state that the necessary transport arrange-

ments have been made for the 52nd Company of Imperial Yeomanry, and if he can state when they will embark for the front.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The 52nd Company will embark in the "Tagus" on the 16th instant at Southampton.

ALLEGED BRITISH PURCHASE OF GUNS AND SADDLES IN BOHEMIA.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether a British military commission was sent to and arrived at Pilsen, in Bohemia, last December, to purchase guns from Messrs. Skoda's works, and if inquiry will be made as regards results of alleged mission; whether any, and, if so, how many, saddles were sent from Bruenn to the British War Office; and whether 2,000 saddles returned to Messrs. Budischofski by the Austrian Government were bought and delivered to the English War Office after the declaration of war between the Transvaal and England.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Perhaps I may be allowed to say that none of the questions contained in the question are correct.

DR. TANNER: I shall raise the point on the Estimates.

RATIONS FOR THE TROOPS - POTATOES.

SIR JOHN KINLOCH (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the potatoes for the use of our troops in South Africa are bought in America; and, if so, what are they costing per ton delivered at Cape Town; and what is the reason that they are not bought in this country.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: My hon. friend is under a misapprehension. Potatoes are not being supplied either from home or foreign sources to the troops in South Africa.

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.

CAPTAIN DONEGAN (Cork, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the attention of the military authorities has

been called by contractors for the supply of various stores to the applications received by them from persons employed in the Royal Ordnance Factories and in the inspection and supply depôts for donations and subscriptions to clubs and other funds; whether the names of the writers of such letters and circulars have been reported by contractors to the authorities; what inquiries have been made at Woolwich, Birmingham, Enfield, Chatham, and Weedon, as to these organisations, and as to the management of these funds and clubs; and what steps the Secretary of State for War has taken, or is prepared to take, in respect to any officer connected with the buying, examination, and weighing of supplies for the Army who is proved to be concerned in such applications to contractors.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): I am only aware of one such case. When the attention of the War Office was drawn to it, investigation was made and it was arranged that two contractors who had contributed in reply to applications should prosecute a meat inspector at the Reserve Depot at Woolwich by whom the application had been made. He was found guilty of obtaining money by false pretences and has since been discharged. Inquiry has been made throughout the factories, and no other case can be traced.

CAPTAIN DONEGAN: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I think the hon. Member, when he reads the answer, will see it covers the whole question.

VOLUNTEER OFFICERS AND THE QUEEN'S REGULATIONS, PARA. 423.

CAPTAIN DONEGAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Donegal, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether paragraph 423 of the Queen's Regulations for the Army applies to officers of the Volunteer force; and, if so, whether it is the intention of the Adjutant General to take notice of the methods alleged to be adopted by commanding officers of Volunteer corps for the purpose of making known their opinions as to the orders and proceedings of their superior officers.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Volunteers except when employed on military duty under certain conditions are not subject to the Queen's regulations. It follows that so far as these regulations are concerned there is nothing to prevent Volunteer officers making known their opinions as to the orders and proceedings of their superior officers. Such action is, however, obviously improper and subversive of discipline.

VOLUNTEERS—SHOOTING REGULATIONS.

MR. HEDDERWICK: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in the most recent regulations, the distances at which Volunteers are required to shoot in order to qualify as marksmen have been reduced; and, if so, to what extent, and why.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Yes, Sir. It is considered advisable that the musketry classification of Volunteers should be based upon compulsory firing. Previously individual firing was only compulsory up to 200 yards, and practice up to and including 800 yards was only carried out optionally by those desiring to be classified as marksmen. Compulsory firing is now extended to 500 and 600 yards, and on this the classification, including that of marksmen, is based.

MR. HEDDERWICK: Then the qualification for marksmen is reduced from 800 to 600 yards?

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Yes, but it is higher at 600 yards than it used to be.

VOLUNTEERS—CAMP ALLOWANCES.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, as only those Volunteer corps that have sufficient funds at their disposal pay their men in camp, whether the War Office will consider the advisability of placing all corps on the same footing by providing pay and allowances to officers and men while in camp, thereby curtailing the officers' camp expenses, and making it possible for a man to attend without being at a loss, and preventing dissatisfaction in the corps.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): A statement will be made at an early date as to the conditions under which Volunteer camps will be held this year.

VOLUNTEERS—RIFLE RANGES.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether officers commanding Volunteer battalions can apply to the War Office for remuneration for the outlay in the construction of rifle ranges during the last three years and for the future, as it is understood that a large sum of money was voted for Volunteer rifle ranges in the Army Estimates of last and again this year.

MR. J. POWELL - WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): No. There is no intention of making a grant retrospectively except where money may have been borrowed for purchase of land, when assistance by means of loan can be given under the Military Lands Act.

VOLUNTEERS—RESERVE COMPANIES.

MR. LEES KNOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will state how many reserve companies of Volunteers have offered themselves, or been formed; and if, even though a Volunteer battalion may be ready to form a reserve company, such a company cannot be formed until the officer commanding the regimental district orders the men to be attested.

MR. J. POWELL - WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Reserve companies are still being formed, and it is too soon as yet to make any statement as to the number.

VOLUNTEERS—BEARER COMPANIES.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in the case of Volunteer battalions with an establishment of ten companies in localities where it is not desired to raise a second battalion, but where such battalions supply each a full bearer company of sixty-four to their brigade, it would be permissible for them to recruit past their establishment so that the bearer companies be supernumerary to the present establishment; and whether the establishment in ten company battalions will be raised so as to include a

mounted infantry company: or whether such company can be recruited supernumerary to the present establishment.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): An application to form an extra company will receive consideration. The question of allowing a mounted infantry company to be formed is being considered.

MILITIA—STATUS OF SERGEANT-MAJORS.

MR. GREYTON (Derbyshire, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if the Secretary of State will consider the advisability of restoring to sergeant-majors of the Militia their status as warrant officers, as the deprivation of rank recommended by a Departmental Committee some years ago has been found to cause dissatisfaction.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): It was found to be inconvenient to have sergeant-majors of Militia battalions possibly senior to the sergeant-major of the regimental district. Consequently the grant of warrant rank was restricted to the latter. The same inconvenience would arise if warrant rank were now granted, and the Secretary of State does not see his way to giving it.

THE 100TH REGIMENT—SUGGESTED REPATRIATION AS A CANADIAN REGIMENT.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether advantage will be taken of the opportunity afforded by raising twelve new battalions to give effect to the frequently expressed wish of the Government and people of Canada that the 100th Regiment, sometimes called the 1st Battalion Prince of Wales's Leinster regiment (Royal Canadians), shall be repatriated as a distinctively Canadian regiment, recruited in Canada, and bearing the Canadian title of which it was deprived by the War Office in 1881.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The matter is the subject of correspondence at the present moment, but the proposal for repatriation has no necessary connection with the raising of the twelve new battalions.

BARRACK ACCOMMODATION IN SCOTLAND—DINGWALL.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, seeing there

are no barracks in Ross-shire, or north of Fort George, will arrangements be made to provide for barracks at Dingwall in the scheme now in course of preparation for barracks necessary for the forces which are to be permanently added to the Army.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): No, Sir. The increase to the forces does not render necessary the provision of barracks at Dingwall.

RIFLE RANGES IN THE EASTERN DISTRICT.

MR. F. W. WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if his attention has been called to the incompleteness of the Return just issued of rifle ranges closed in the Eastern District—for instance, Norwich closed for distances beyond 300 yards, Bury St. Edmunds entirely closed, Attleborough closed except for reduced charge ammunition; and whether he will obtain a full and amended Return of ranges partially or entirely closed since the issue of the Lee-Metford rifle.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The Return is a complete Return of the ranges closed to full charge firing with the authority of the War Office in the Eastern District since the introduction of the Lee-Metford rifle. The Norwich range was condemned as unsafe for the Martini-Henry, and has never been open for full charge Lee-Metford practice. The Bury St. Edmunds range was reported as unsuitable in 1891, and has never been included in the annual range returns. The Attleborough range is apparently a private range as to which no reports have been made to the War Office.

THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT.

MR. JOHN HUTTON (Yorkshire, Richmond): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the first, second, and third battalions of the Yorkshire Regiment are now on foreign service; and, if so, whether it is the intention to at once embody the fourth battalion; and, if not, whether he will explain the reasons for not doing so.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The answer to the first question is in the affirmative. The whole of the Militia will be embodied about the 1st May.

ARMY COMMISSIONS—CADETS.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, seeing that direct commissions are only being given to candidates from the universities of the colonies over twenty years of age, commissions are being also offered to boys at the public schools, and if such boys will be older than the cadets at the Royal Military College and Royal Military Academy; whether it is intended that such boys shall also take precedence of the cadets who have passed into the college and academy by competition, and have received military instruction; if the Secretary of State will consider the propriety of shortening the college course of the cadets so as to save their ultimate seniority; and whether commissions have lately been given to men who had neither passed educationally by the "literary" examination nor professionally by competition, while there are many who have passed a high qualifying test but were outstripped in the competition and who have not been offered commissions, such candidates having necessarily undergone a special and expensive preparation.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): A few commissions are being offered to the public schools. The recipients of them will probably be a little younger than the Sandhurst and Woolwich cadets. It is impossible to further shorten the Sandhurst course, which has already been shortened by six months. A few commissions have been given to candidates specially qualified who have not passed the tests referred to. It has already been explained that in the pressing need for more officers exceptional measures have had to be adopted.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: May I ask whether, during the Crimean War, cadets were not allowed to pass an examination in one half the usual time in order to fill the ranks of the Army, and, also, whether it is not the case that men who failed in the competitive examination of the Royal Military Colleges are actually receiving commissions in preference to cadets now serving there?

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I should be glad, as this is an historical question, if my right hon. friend would kindly put it on the Paper.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: The second question is not an historical question.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the right hon. Gentleman had better give notice.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I beg to give notice that I shall call attention to this matter on the Estimates.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the military authorities will consider the claims of cadets at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, to receive commissions in the Royal Field Artillery before appointing direct to that arm of the service those who have not had the advantage of any instruction at that establishment.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Half the commissions given to the outgoing batch of cadets from the Academy will be for Field Artillery. It is desirable that the Garrison Artillery should have the remainder, and not be deprived of officers who have had the benefit of the education at the Academy.

COMMANDS OF RESERVE BATTALIONS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the command and second in command of Reserve battalions will be given to officers on the Reserve when eligible.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Yes, Sir. In many instances this is being done.

ARMY CHAPLAINS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will state the number of Army officiating Episcopalian and Presbyterian chaplains respectively, and their average annual remuneration.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The officiating clergy are appointed by the generals commanding districts. The particulars required could only be obtained by reference to all the districts. This would involve considerable labour, for which there is no time at present.

INDIAN NATIVE REGIMENTS— CAPITATION GRANT.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the British Government intends to pay the Indian Government a capitation grant for the two native regiments it is taking from India, similar to the capitation grant which it obtains from India on every British soldier borne on the Indian establishment.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The Imperial Government defrays the actual charges for recruiting as claimed by the Indian Government in the case of these regiments instead of paying a capitation rate.

NAVY—TRIALS OF THE "HIGH- FLYER" AND "MINERVA."

MR. PENN (Lewisham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he can give the results of the further trials of Her Majesty's ships "Highflyer" and "Minerva."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The results of the last two trials of the "Highflyer" and "Minerva" are as follows, as reported by telegraph—

3rd March, 1900.—"Minerva" and "Highflyer" completed satisfactorily C 2 steam trials (i.e., of 60 hours duration at 17 knots). Coal, all purposes: "Minerva," 358 tons; "Highflyer," 375 tons. Coal per i.h.p., engines only: "Minerva," 1.95; "Highflyer," 2.07. Coal per i.h.p., all purposes: "Minerva," 2.22; "Highflyer," 2.37.

7th March, 1900.—"Minerva" and "Highflyer" completed satisfactorily D 1 steam trials (i.e., of 30 hours duration at highest speed that can be maintained). Coal, all purposes: "Minerva," 225 tons; "Highflyer," 267 tons. Coal per i.h.p., engines only: "Minerva," 1.97; "Highflyer," 2.1. Coal per i.h.p., all purposes: "Minerva," 2.22; "Highflyer," 2.52. "Highflyer" averaged 400 h.p., and half a knot greater speed than "Minerva."

TEETH OF NAVAL RECRUITS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he will state what percentage of men and boys recruited for the Royal Navy are rejected on account of bad teeth.

MR. GOSCHEN: We have no statistics as to the number of men and boys rejected on account of bad teeth, but it is large. It might be as much as 25 per cent. Careful attention has to be given to the teeth of candidates as a test of health and suitability for service afloat.

NIGERIA—SALE OF DRINKS AND FIREARMS—SLAVE RAIDING.

MR. HAZELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government, now that it is responsible for the administration of Nigeria, is maintaining strictly the restrictions on the slave trade and the prohibition of the sale of firearms and intoxicating drink established by the Royal Niger Company in the region of the Lower Niger; what steps they are taking to extend these regulations to the whole of Nigeria; and whether they are taking any measures to put a speedy end to the slave raiding which is productive of such evils in that country.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The company's regulations as to the slave trade and the sale of firearms were practically the same as those in force in the Niger Coast Protectorate and Lagos, and are being maintained. The sale of intoxicating drink was not prohibited by the company in the southern portion of their territories. The prohibition in Northern Nigeria is being maintained, but it is not practicable to extend it to Southern Nigeria. Measures will be taken in the future, as in the past, to put a stop to slave raiding wherever it is possible to do so.

NEW CABLE ROUTE TO THE CAPE.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether steps have been taken to secure the possibility of messages to Cape Town by the new cable of the Eastern Telegraph Company, in respect of which a payment of £10,000 has been made in the present financial year, being sent without passing through any foreign stations; or whether it is contemplated that all messages shall continue to pass through a Portuguese station.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The payment of £10,000 was made merely to secure the opening of the cable between Cape Town, St.

Helena, and Ascension at the earliest possible date, and had no reference to the matter alluded to in the question. That cable will, I believe, be extended to St. Vincent, through which, as now, messages will pass.

INCOME TAX ON COMPANY DIVIDENDS.

MR. HUBBARD (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in the event of the income tax being raised to 1s. in the £ as from 1st April next, the rate of tax payable upon interest or dividends which have accrued for the year ending 31st March, 1900, but are not actually paid out till after that date, remains at 8d. in the £; and whether the tax payable upon interest or dividends accrued for the first six months of 1900 will be at the rate of 8d. for the first three months, and 1s. for the second three months, and for other periods in proportion.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Assuming that the question relates to the dividends of English companies, the answer to both paragraphs is in the affirmative (but the date on which the alteration of the rate will take effect is April 6th, not the 1st). The Inland Revenue will in a few days issue full instructions explaining the rules to be followed in deducting income tax in all cases.

BUDGET—NEW BEER DUTY.

CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS (Devonshire, Torquay): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is his intention that the additional duty of 1s. per barrel on beer shall be of a temporary character as well as the additional duty of 6d. a gallon on spirits, and the rest of the indirect taxation proposed in the Budget.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: If my hon. friend will look at the resolutions which have been passed, he will see that all this additional indirect taxation is on a temporary footing.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT, 1890.

MR. HAZELL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will grant a Return of the local authorities in England and Wales that have carried out housing schemes under the Housing of the Work-

ing Classes Act, 1890, showing details of cost and income, number of persons displaced and provided for, rate of interest on and period of repayment for the loan.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): There will be no objection to a Return on the subject referred to in the question; but perhaps before the hon. Member moves for it he will place himself in communication with the Local Government Board as to the details of the Return.

EDUCATION—RELIGIOUS EMBLEMS IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that in the national schools of the parish of Hensall, Yorkshire, which Church and dissenting children alike are obliged to attend, there is in the mixed school an altar with candles, and a crucifix suspended over it, and in the infants' school another altar with two pictures of the Annunciation and the Nativity over it, and a crucifix suspended over the fireplace; also that the children of the parish, both Church and dissenting, are taken to hear Mass every Thursday at nine o'clock, and have been taken to church to the "Blessing and Imposition of Ashes," and are taught the rosary; and, if so, whether the Education Department will interfere to put a stop to these practices, and to have the emblems removed from the national schools.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (SIR J. GORST, Cambridge University): The Education Department has no information on the subjects referred to in the question, and has no power to direct the removal of emblems or to interfere with the religious teaching in the school so long as the Conscience Clause is observed.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS GOVERNING BODY IN THE CHESTER DIOCESE.

MR. GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether a modified scheme for the constitution of a governing body of an association under the Voluntary Schools Act was received from the Chester Diocese, and approved

by the Education Department, in January last; whether he can state if this modified scheme was prepared by the governing body formed under the original scheme; and, if not, by what person or persons the scheme was prepared; whether the managers of the voluntary schools in the Chester Diocese had any notification given to them of the proposed changes in this scheme, or whether information on this subject was reserved until the scheme had been submitted to and approved by the Education Department; and, is he aware that the modifications which have been incorporated in the new scheme have resulted in restricting the liberty of managers in selecting their representatives; and, if so, have the managers any appeal against a decision which has deprived them of a liberty admitted by the Voluntary Schools Act, and which they were assured during the debate on the Second Reading of the Act should be reserved.

SIR J. GORST: The answers to the first two paragraphs of the question are in the affirmative. In regard to the third paragraph, I understand that notification of the proposed changes was not given to all the managers. During the debates on the Bill the impression no doubt prevailed that teachers would be eligible as members of the governing bodies. But the Committee of Council are not aware that any pledge was given by any member of the Government that the Department would refuse to approve the rules of any association which did not admit of the representation of the managers by teachers. Under the circumstances, the Committee of Council are not prepared to decide at present whether this governing body have gone beyond the provisions of the Act; but the Education Department will communicate with them, in the hope that they will see their way to withdrawing the limitation, to which it appears from the hon. Member's question that some of the managers object.

MR. GRAY: Have local managers a right to appeal to the Education Department, seeing that they had no previous knowledge of the scheme?

SIR J. GORST: Everybody has a right to appeal to the Education Department, but what power the Department may have to remedy their grievances I cannot say.

RAILWAY COLLISION NEAR LONDON BRIDGE.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the result of an inquiry held after the railway collision which took place on 6th January outside London Bridge Station; whether he is aware that the report states that this collision, together with other recent ones, emphasises the need for improvement in the existing methods of fog signalling; and whether he will undertake to increase the public safety by advising railway companies to adopt some uniform system which shall satisfy the Board of Trade.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. RITCHIE, Croydon): Yes, Sir. The report referred to has been under very careful consideration, together with that on the unfortunate accident at Wivelsfield. Immediately on the receipt of the reports I caused copies to be sent to the hon. secretary of the Associated Railway Companies and requested that the serious attention of the companies might be directed to Sir F. Marindin's observations in these reports as to the necessity for the adoption of some improved system of fog signalling on railways.

LIGHTHOUSE ADMINISTRATION.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, if an advisory or consultative committee has been formed, on his suggestion, to consider questions relating to the lighthouse administration of the kingdom; if so, who are the members of the committee, what are their functions and powers, by whom and on what principle they were elected, where and when do they meet, and are the expenses of the committee defrayed out of the Mercantile Marine or any other public fund.

MR. RITCHIE: An advisory committee has been formed by the Chamber of Shipping of the United Kingdom for the purpose of representing to the Board of Trade and the lighthouse authorities the views of shipowners and others with regard to all questions of new works proposed to be carried out by the lighthouse authorities. The committee consists of twelve members, of whom four represent English shipowners, two Scottish

shipowners, and two Irish shipowners, one of the English shipping representatives having been selected by the Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association. In addition to the shipping members, the committee includes two merchants selected by the Association of Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, and two underwriters representing Lloyd's and the Liverpool Underwriters' Association. I shall be happy to supply the hon. Member with a list of the names. I have made arrangements for a meeting between the committee and representatives of the lighthouse authorities at the Board of Trade early next month for the purpose of considering the new works proposed to be undertaken during the coming financial year. There is no public fund out of which the expenses of the committee can be defrayed.

THE COMPANIES BILL.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether that part of the Companies Bill which, if passed, would give to simple contract creditors of a company in liquidation preferential right of payment over all secured creditors, is intended by the Government to be persisted in; and whether it is the intention of the Government to have this alteration in the law, invalidating many millions of securities, discussed in Committee of the whole House; and, if not, whether ample notice and time will be given for its full discussion on Second Reading.

MR. RITCHIE: The clause referred to by the hon. Member was not in the Bill as introduced in the House of Lords, and was not inserted at the instance of the Government. It will require careful consideration, but I am not able at the present stage to make any statement as regards the attitude of the Government with regard to any particular proposal in the Bill. The Government hope the House will refer the Bill to a Grand Committee.

PRISON OFFICIALS' RETIRING PENSIONS.

MR. JOHN HUTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a memorial signed by a large number of prison officials with regard to the terms of their retiring pensions; and whether,

in consideration of the nature of the work of prison officials, he is prepared to recommend that they should be entitled to obtain the maximum pension at an earlier date than under the Civil Service scale.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The question of pensions is primarily one for the Treasury, and to deal with it as suggested would require legislation, which I am afraid I must say I am not at present prepared to propose.

SEAMEN'S ADVANCE NOTES—AMERICAN LAWS.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Oldham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what are the results of the careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government, promised by him last August*, of the questions affecting British shipping which arise in connection with Departmental Circular, No. 17, dated 8th February, 1899, promulgated by the Treasury Department of the Bureau of Navigation at Washington, U.S.A., reciting an amendment in the Federal Laws of 1884 by an Act approved on the 21st of December, 1898; whether, under the amendment referred to, it becomes unlawful to pay any seaman wages in advance of the time when he has actually earned the same; and whether Her Majesty's Government have been able by negotiation to reserve the British shipowners and British seamen in the United States the right to make and receive advances, which are legal in this country.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRONRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Advances to seamen are strictly prohibited by the United States Act of December 21st, 1898, but provision is made for allotment notes not exceeding one month's wages in favour of original creditors. The prohibition of advances is made applicable to foreign ships as to vessels of the United State. The Act appears to Her Majesty's Government to be directed against crimping. In those circumstances Her Majesty's Government have not thought it necessary to enter into any negotiations at

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxv., page 1363.

present on the subject. The Act will be closely watched.

SCHOOL BOARD REGISTERS IN SCOTLAND.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of the fact that a large number of persons in Scotland who vote in Parliamentary and county council elections are disqualified to vote for school board candidates by reason of their rentals being less than £4. upwards of 3,000 crofters and fishermen out of 3,160 being thus disqualified in the Island of Lewis alone, will he say whether, having regard to his recent promise, he has yet been able to consider the School Board Electorate (Scotland) Bill now before the House, and if he is prepared to support it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We do not propose to sanction any change in the law at present.

MR. WEIR: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the Bill which stands in my name?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not seen it.

LADYSMITH REJOICINGS—DISTURBANCES AT BELFAST.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether the town clerk of Belfast has received 73 claims for compensation for malicious injuries arising out of the late rejoicings in that city over the relief of Ladysmith; and can he state the exact amount of money these claims involve.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The town clerk of Belfast has received 76 claims, amounting to £617 12s. 5d., for compensation for malicious injuries arising out of the recent disturbances in that city, which were participated in, as the hon. Member is aware, not only by a few individuals who belonged to the Protestant party, but also by a Roman Catholic mob. The number of claims made by Roman Catholics, so far as I can ascertain, is 27, amounting to £172 7s. 6d.; by Protestants, 41, amounting to £382 9s. 2d.; and by 8 Jews, amounting to £62 15s. 9d.

CORK INLAND REVENUE OFFICE.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Maurice Healy) I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether arrangements have yet been made to transfer the Inland Revenue Offices at Cork from the Cork Custom House to some more convenient neighbourhood, and what place has been selected for the purpose.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): Not yet. The matter is the subject of negotiations between the Departments concerned.

CORK POST OFFICE.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether arrangements are now complete so as to permit the work on the new post office in Cork to be begun; and, if so, when is the work to be begun.

MR. HANBURY: Plans of the alterations have been prepared, and are under consideration, but they have not yet been finally approved. It is intended to begin the work during the ensuing financial year.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: What caused the delay?

MR. HANBURY: I rather venture to think they wanted a better plan than was originally designed.

RESTRICTIONS ON THE LANDING IN ENGLAND OF DOGS BROUGHT FROM IRELAND.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE (Londonderry): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can see his way to relax the restrictions on the landing of dogs in England coming from Ireland for breeding purposes under proper guarantees.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): I do not think it would be practicable to make any concession in favour of dogs brought from Ireland for the purposes to which the hon. Member refers consistently with full security against the re-introduction of rabies. The hon. Member will understand that the

restrictions in question are of a temporary character, to be withdrawn so soon as the operations now proceeding with a view to the extermination of the disease in Ireland have been attended with success.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture why performing dogs and greyhounds are included, classed together, by the English Board of Agriculture, as animals to which they were satisfied concessions should be made; and how many cases of rabies are reliably reported as having occurred in Great Britain and Wales during the past six months.

MR. LONG: With a view to meet the convenience of the owners of the dogs concerned, we have hitherto seen our way to prescribe special conditions for the landing of performing dogs, and of dogs entered to run at certain coursing meetings which it was considered would secure the requisite measure of safety, but the conditions differ materially in the two cases, and they cannot be said to have been classed together. Six cases of rabies are known to have occurred since the 1st September last, the last being on the 10th November, but two of these were cases in which the dog had been placed under restrictions.

RABIES IN IRELAND.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland how many cases of rabies are reliably reported and authenticated as having occurred during the past three and six months respectively in Ireland; whether any toxic results have been demonstrated; and upon what evidence the diagnosis of rabies was founded.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (MR. PLUNKETT, Dublin County, S.): Eighteen authenticated cases of rabies were reported from the whole of Ireland during the six months ended 28th February, and of these, eight cases occurred during the past three months. Toxic results were demonstrated in eleven of the eighteen cases. The diagnosis of rabies in all these cases was founded either upon experimental investigation by what is known as the Pasteur inoculation method, or, where such investigation was not practicable, upon the

results of careful inquiries made at the place of outbreak by qualified veterinary inspectors.

DOG MUZZLING IN KING'S COUNTY.

MR. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can state when he will withdraw the muzzling order now in force in the King's County part of Edenderry Union, seeing that no case of rabies has occurred in this area for a considerable period, and that the order does not extend to the adjoining parts of the union situate in Meath and Kildare, within a very short distance of the town of Edenderry.

MR. PLUNKETT: The unit of area for the purposes of the muzzling of dogs Order is the administrative county, and not the poor law union. I hope it will be found possible to withdraw the Order from the whole of King's County in the course of next month.

AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN COUNTY MONAGHAN.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture for Ireland what steps, if any, have been taken to extend to County Monaghan such benefits as may exist in the new law relating to agriculture and technical education.

MR. PLUNKETT: No special steps have yet been taken in the direction indicated in the question, and until the new Department has been fully constituted it cannot be stated what action may be taken.

IRISH COERCION ACT, 1887— SUGGESTED REPEAL.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will signalise Her Majesty's visit to Ireland by introducing, during the present session, a Bill to repeal the Irish Coercion Act of 1887.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No part of Ireland is at present proclaimed under the Crimes Act, as the House and hon. Members are perhaps aware.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Crimes Act does exist, and is at the disposal of the Lord Lieutenant?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is true.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: And that's the point of my question.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state when it is proposed to take the Second Reading of the Housing of the Working Classes Act (1890) Amendment Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Bill will not be taken this week. I can give no more definite pledge on the subject.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland a question with regard to the Tithe Rent-charge (Ireland) Bill and the Charitable Loans (Ireland) Bill—namely, whether he will give the Irish Members a promise that he will not take the Second Reading of either of these Bills without a week's notice.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that, perhaps, that question should more properly be directed to me than to my right hon. friend. I am anxious to give the Irish Members, and, indeed, any section of the House, as long notice as I can of the taking of Bills in which they are interested. But, as I have before observed, a Government may hamper itself too much by pledges of this kind, so that it would be almost impossible to conduct the business of the House, as accidents may, and do, occur. I will do my best, however, to meet the wishes of hon. Members, but I cannot give any more definite pledge.

MR. DILLON: Surely the right hon. Gentleman will recognise that under the peculiar circumstances in which Irish Members are placed they ought to have some assurance in reference to the two important Bills in which they are so deeply interested. Yet he has given us no assurance at all.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sure that the hon. Gentleman and his friends will upon reflection see that I do my very best to meet their wishes on matters connected with Ireland. I am extremely anxious to meet their desire, and will certainly do my best in the case of these particular Bills.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I desire to ask a question in regard to the Finance Bill. The right hon. Gentleman may be aware that it is not yet printed. He may also be aware that sometimes Bills as low down as No. 5 on the Orders of the Day, which is the position occupied by this Bill to-night, are unexpectedly brought on. Will he give us an assurance that this Bill will not be taken to-day, nor until it is printed? Can he also state definitely when it will be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It certainly will not be taken to-night. I should be sorry to give any absolute pledge, but my hope is that the Second Reading may be taken on Monday next.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): When is the War Loan Bill to be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: To-morrow.

NEW BILLS.

CENSUS (IRELAND).

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): I have to ask leave to introduce a Bill, to enable the census to be taken in Ireland. (The right hon. Gentleman's voice was inaudible in the gallery, but he was understood to state that the measure was practically identical with the English Bill, there being only one or two alterations on minor points to meet the special needs of Ireland.)

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to take a census of the Irish-speaking people?

MR. ATKINSON: Yes, Sir.

Bill for taking the Census for Ireland in the year one thousand nine hundred and one, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General for Ireland and Mr. Gerald Balfour.

CENSUS (IRELAND) BILL.

"For taking the Census for Ireland in the year one thousand nine hundred and one," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 120.]

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): I rise to ask leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Agricultural Holdings Act, and I hope it will not be necessary for me to say more than a few words upon it. We have taken the fundamental principle which underlies the existing Act of dealing with this subject—namely, that the measure of compensation shall be the value to the incoming tenant of the improvement effected by the outgoing tenant. As the law stands at present, the tenant makes his claim and the landlord has a right to make a claim as a set off against that of the tenant, the amount of the landlord's claim being limited to that of the tenant's claim. We propose to improve the tenant's position, and to enable him to claim for certain improvements which he has not now the power to do. For instance, the Bill will enable him to claim for all corn consumed on the farm, whether grown on it or not. The Bill also simplifies the machinery under which the claim can be established, by bringing in the Arbitration Act in an amended form. Both tenant and landlord will be able to bring their claims before the same tribunal; and whereas at present the only claims which can be so settled are claims arising under the Agricultural Holdings Act, the Bill enables all claims, including those arising under the common law, to be dealt with in one arbitration. We propose that there shall be a single arbitrator; we abolish the present statutory obligation to have a referee and umpire, and we give the landlord and tenant the greatest freedom in the procedure for establishing their claims. The machinery we set up should do much to diminish the expense of a settlement. The tenant will no longer be required to give notice of his claim. Formerly, if he failed to give notice he not only lost all the rights he enjoyed under the Act, but he prejudiced his other rights. We provide that no notice shall now be necessary, but the claim must be made within three months of the termination of the tenancy. Penal rents are altogether abolished, and certain ambiguities in the law of distress are removed. The schedule under which the tenant claims compensation is amended, and the Board of Agriculture is introduced as the governing authority instead of the County

Court, in the case where the landlord has to borrow money to pay compensation and charge the estate with the loan. In this and other ways the procedure for the settlement of differences between landlord and tenant will, we hope, be cheapened and simplified. I believe that the measure is a practical and business-like one, and I trust that the House will give it impartial consideration, in order that we may settle once for all the differences between owners and occupiers of land.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I suppose the Bill applies only to England?

*MR. LONG: To Great Britain only.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I should like to say one or two words upon the right hon. Gentleman's statement. In the first place I think that all interested in this question will welcome some of the proposals he has foreshadowed, and will be inclined to think that they are a step in the right direction. The Bill would seem to be rather a Bill for the improvement of the machinery for determining mutual claims and rights of landlord and tenant than for making larger reforms. The arbitration proposal would be welcomed as tending to cheapen and simplify the procedure of the Act. My right hon. friend has referred to one or two minor alterations of the law and to the extension of the Schedules for tenants' improvements which he proposes to make, but I could not help noticing one serious omission from his description of the Bill. There was no reference in his speech to two such questions as compensation for laying down permanent pasture, or for increased fertility from continuous high farming, provision for which the working tenants of the country have demanded as necessary to any satisfactory Amendment of the Agricultural Holdings Act. If I am to interpret the silence of the right hon. Gentleman as meaning that there is no attempt in the Bill to deal with two such important questions, which have so long exercised the thoughts of agriculturists, and have been voiced by them on so many occasions, I very much regret it, for we know it has long been felt that tenant farmers—who at great cost to themselves have carried out the highly advantageous improvement of laying down permanent pasture, when it is well done,

and who have also added fertility to the land by continuous high farming—ought to be considered. If no attempt is made to deal in the Bill with these things I fear it will lead to a good deal of discussion when the measure is before the House. My right hon friend is well aware that the strongest expressions of opinion have been given by our Chambers of Agriculture in favour of accepting the recommendations of the Committee appointed by the Chambers to deal with these subjects as the minimum of concession to working agriculturists. But the proposals fell far short of even the very moderate standard set up by the Chambers. I cannot sit down without offering a comment on the singular contrast presented between the belated introduction of a Bill which is to fulfil pledges given again and again by Ministers, but postponed year after year—no doubt to the satisfaction of the right hon. Gentleman's friends—and the action of the Government, which shortly after it came into power devoted so much time to carrying the Agricultural Rates Bill when the question was the relief of the landlords. During the sessions of 1893 and 1894 we had to listen to furious and fervid declamation about the sufferings of distressed agriculturists, on Motions of Adjournment, about once a fortnight. And we remember the prolonged and passionate debates with which the Agricultural Rate Act was introduced in 1896. I think we can all understand how the enthusiasm then shown for the tenant farmers of this country ceased as soon as certain millions were ear-marked for the benefit of the landlords, with the result that we have had to wait five years before any attempt is made to deal with the case of the tenants in reference to a subject which occupies five-sixths of the Report of the Royal Commission. And now we have this Bill brought in in a speech lasting less than five minutes, and under a Rule which only allows one other speech to be made. I venture to think I am justified in drawing attention to the enormous contrast between the way in which the Government acted on behalf of the landlord class and the scanty and belated attention they are now giving to the demands of the working tenant farmers of this country.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS.

Bill to amend the Law relating to Agricultural Holdings, ordered to be

brought in by Mr. Long, Mr. Solicitor General, and the Lord Advocate.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Agricultural Holdings," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 121.]

SUPPLY.

ARMY ESTIMATES.

Order for Committee read.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. WYNDHAM, Dover): Before moving that you, Sir, do now leave the chair, I feel that I owe to this House some account of the objects to be covered by the Army Estimates, and some explanation of the form in which these Estimates are presented this year. The Estimates are altogether exceptional—in the first place, of course, in respect of their magnitude, but also because they present some features which are novel in our procedure, and the nature and the necessity of which demand some words from me. These Estimates have been framed for the purpose of effecting four principal objects. Hon. Members who have in their hands a copy of the Estimates will find on page 6, under four columns lettered a, b, c, and d, a discrimination between the totals which are set apart for each one of those four principal objects. The first principal object is the further prosecution of this war. I feel that I should be hardly justified in enlarging at any great length this afternoon on that section of the subjects covered by the Estimates. The sum set apart for the further prosecution of the war stands at a little more than £31,500,000. The Leader of the Opposition has more than once most patriotically assured us that, speaking for those who follow his lead, he will not stint the Government in any provision for which they may ask for the prosecution of the war. He leaves to us the responsibility, and reserves to himself and his friends the right of subsequent inquiry and criticism. That being so, and seeing that during the debate on the Address I had occasion to speak at some length about the war proper,* I feel that

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxviii., page 316.

this afternoon I am not called upon to repeat that speech, because it would be mere repetition. I should cover the same ground, but in place of the amounts which I then gave I should be able to give a higher total for the men, the horses, the stores, and the transports which have been concentrated in South Africa. I am very loth to parade those totals. When I have given these mere enumerations, I have done so under the sincere belief that they were the subjects of legitimate curiosity. But I find that my action has been misconstrued in quarters outside; and that when I give figures I am accused of endeavouring to snap a bolt in favour of the War Office administration. Nothing has ever been further from my mind. I believe that many lessons are to be learnt from the war, and I hope as ardently as anyone that lessons will be learnt from the war and turned to the best possible account. These figures generally provide for the pay, subsistence, clothing, transport, and stores of the forces actually in South Africa, and I can only this afternoon reply by anticipation to some of the questions which have appeared on the Paper. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean has put down a somewhat long and detailed question in respect of the colonial forces in South Africa. Now I am not able to answer this except in an approximate manner. What I said the other day is still true. These forces, both the force raised in South Africa and the other forces offered to us by our self-governing colonies are still increasing factors, and therefore it is not possible to give the exact total. In this Estimate, in order to cover all the numbers which might possibly come in, we are setting the total down at 35,000, and the numbers up to the latest I have—February 26—are—Of South African forces, 21,240; from other colonies already in South Africa, 4,829; and on passage or under orders, 3,204, or 8,033 from our other self-governing colonies, making a grand total in South Africa, or under orders, of 29,273. The House will see that we have left ourselves a margin of something more than another 5,000 in case those forces increase, as probably they will. The right hon. Baronet has also put a number of questions as to the rate of pay and conditions upon which the services of these forces have been accepted. With regard to the South African forces I need

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not repeat what I have already told the House as to the original terms. With regard to the other self-governing colonies they were to put the men down at their own charge in South Africa, and from the date of disembarkation the Imperial Government take them over at Imperial rates, pay, allowance, and pension, and undertook to take them back. But our colonies have behaved with so much patriotism in this respect that a time came when it was felt that we might increase largely those terms; and in respect of those under orders and future contingents we propose to undertake the whole burden of transport from the day they set forth. Then I come to the local South African forces raised there. Here the question is very complicated, and I do not believe that a detailed statement can be made. There were in South Africa a number of constitutional forces receiving traditional rates of pay. Some were raised on these lines at an early date; some were raised at the instance of Sir Alfred Milner and Sir George White. When I was speaking during the debate I found myself confronted with this criticism, that we had not been ready or prompt enough in responding to such appeals. But I was able to prove to the House that we only lost a week in the attempt to grapple with this very difficult problem of the different rates of pay. What would have been said if, in response to Sir Alfred Milner, who was under the apprehension of a rebellion, and what would have been said if, in response to the appeal of Sir George White, who was repelling the invasion of Natal, we had haggled over those details as to rates of pay? In my judgment—I do not know whether I am right or wrong—that would not have been the only, or the most mischievous, consequence of such action on our part. We might have throttled with red tape the new birth of a force which we may live to see revolutionise the problem of Imperial defence; and that is why I deprecate any detailed discussion in this House of questions arising out of the terms of these offers which were made and the rates of pay accorded. The Dominion of Canada, the self-governing colonies of Australia, New Zealand, and many other dependencies of the Crown came forward, not under an obligation but of their own free will, to assist us when we went to the assistance of their sister colonies in the

Cape and Natal. They did not fulfil a contract; they obeyed the instinct of an Imperial race; and that being so we must wait for the development of years before we can hope to grapple in detail with the very interesting question which will arise out of this employment of the colonial forces side by side with Regulars at different rates of pay. I may be sanguine, but I think it is quite possible that our colonies, discovering and rejoicing in their new-found strength and welcoming the opportunity which is theirs, may play a very great part in the future evolution of this Empire, and will seek, not indeed to perpetuate these splendid efforts they have made from year to year, but to render their repetition more easy by adopting some kind of organisation on prearranged lines. If that be so, if it be true, we may look forward almost with hope to a time when in Canada, Australasia, and I will add in South Africa also, we may see forces akin to our own—Militia and Volunteers—rising up where they do not now exist, and being perfected where, as in the case of Canada, they already exist in large numbers. If we may look forward to that time, to the time when the colonies see fit to select and test the military merits in time of peace of those among the colonial subjects of the Queen to whom, and to whom only, they will accord the coveted post of honour in times of Imperial danger—if that be not too visionary, I can appeal to the House whether we, the representative Assembly of this country, are not likely to be guilty of a want of tact if we discuss too fully what are after all the affairs of other self-governing dependencies of the Crown. It is for them to act and not for us, in my opinion, with our vast accumulated wealth, even to solicit too earnestly any assistance from our colonies in view of their voluntary offers during the last few months. Under this first column there are many other subjects on which it is difficult to speak, but harder not to speak at all. In introducing these Estimates I must be allowed to pay my passing tribute to the heroism of our troops, to the stoical tenacity of Sir George White at Ladysmith, to the promptitude and versatility of the Naval Brigade, to the dogged determination of Sir Redvers Buller, to the swift precision of the cavalry movements which have been directed by General French, and to the

yeomen service of the African colonial division, which has been put to such a good purpose by that veteran of colonial and border warfare, General Brabant. All have won laurels, but of all who have won them the Irish regiments by their dash and valour and the price they have paid are entitled to the post of honour; all have won laurels, and all have co-operated to crown with success the deep-laid strategy of Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener. These successes have been so welcome that they may no doubt—and we believe and hope they will—accelerate the happy issue of this campaign; but they do not, in the opinion of the Government, justify any diminution of provision at present for the future conduct of the campaign. The financial course of this war—and it is that with which we have to deal—although it may ultimately, does not immediately alter with the fluctuations of failure and of success. It depends upon the difficulty and the cost of maintaining a huge army in the field in a distant country which is destitute of surplus supplies; and the Government feel that it would be rash, at all events at present, to think that the months during which that army may have to remain there are likely to be materially shortened. We are taking in this War Estimate what we believe to be enough money to prosecute our efforts at what I may call full pressure for another full period of six months. One need not necessarily believe that there will be fighting going on all that time, but as we think there may be a possibility of large numbers of troops being in the field we are making provision for carrying on our efforts, if I may say so put it, at half-pressure for a further period of six months. The House will see that such an estimate must be highly speculative. There will be no abrupt transition between the war at full pressure and the war at half-pressure, and the Estimate has been difficult to frame. The only fact we have to go upon is the fact that the Estimate of £23,000,000 for the conduct of this war up to the end of March will be, we think, very closely realised. Basing our calculations on that we have to take two considerations into account. These charges, including the £23,000,000, have been increasing charges on a scale which has ascended in proportion to the greater efforts we have had to make. On the other hand, that £23,000,000 includes the prime charges, the heavy cost of transport

in this country. Calculated in that way we think that this sum of 31½ millions will prove sufficient for everything except what I may call the final charges. We are not asking for one penny in this Estimate for winding up and liquidating the transaction, bringing the troops home, and giving them gratuities at the end of the war. Then turning to the conduct of the war, I will ask hon. Members to follow me by turning to the third column "Temporary increases." There is a sum set down of £6,228,000. That is for the emergency scheme of the Government to meet the needs of defence which have arisen owing to the fact that so large a part of the home Army is no longer in this country. Upon that point the hon. and gallant Member for Taunton has asked me in a question to explain the additional numbers of this estimate of 217,551 men. I think this is a convenient opportunity to deal with that question because these additional numbers are due in part to the subject with which I have just dealt—namely, the war, and in part also to the subject which I propose to deal with now—namely, the emergency scheme of home defence. The numbers are made up as follows:—For calling up the Reserves to the colours, 80,000; for Royal Reserve battalions—that is to say, soldiers who have served their time with the colours and in the Reserve, and who have now been invited for one year—we have taken in this Estimate, 50,000. But, as every one knows, the Vote for men is more of a constitutional safeguard than as an accurate forecast of what is likely to happen, and although we hope we shall get 50,000, we do not claim we shall get that figure, and I believe my right hon. friend has, in his memorandum, taken a lower figure than that for men who come back to the colours. Then, for soldiers transferred from the Indian to the home establishments, 10,000. That covers all those who have been borrowed for the purposes of the war, and it also covers—I wish to make it quite clear to the House—two battalions of native infantry who have been borrowed from the Indian establishment to take the place of British battalions at Ceylon and Singapore. Then, for the colonial troops I have given the number of 35,000; for the Imperial Yeomanry, 10,000; for the Imperial Volunteers who have been placed on the establishment of the Regular

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Army, including not only the companies who have gone to South Africa, but the companies who are waiting in readiness at home, 15,000; and for the gain from recruiting—not the total gain from recruiting, but the gain from recruiting which arises from the fact that discharges have been stopped, and which, therefore, may justly be put down as due to the war—17,000. And then there is a small figure, 551, for staff and departmental additions, and those figures added together will give a total of 217,551 men who are voted to the establishment additionally in consequence of the war. Having disposed of that question that was put to me, I come back to the figure for our emergency scheme, and again, as the Leader of the Opposition has assured me that that he will not stint the Government in any demand which they may make for putting our home defence during this year upon a satisfactory basis, I may remind the House that in introducing the Supplementary Estimate* I dwelt on this point at some length, in fact I think I made six speeches in eight days on the subject. But I have something now to add to what I then said, as our scheme has been worked out in greater detail. The amount of money which is being taken for the Royal Reserve battalions is £1,262,000. This is a very interesting experiment which we are making. We have often been told by certain Members of the House and by those outside who take an interest in our military system, that we have not in this country what they call a proper Reserve, that the Army Reserve is really part of our first line. I quite agree: I have always taken that view; but if we have no organised second Reserve, no Landwehr, in this country of men who have been through the Regular Army, at any rate we now find we have an unorganised material to draw upon for such a force. Invitation was our only course. Many critics tell us the time has come to command, and not to ask, people to serve. Of course it is said you can do anything by Act of Parliament, but there is one thing you cannot do in a free country by Act of Parliament, and that is to impose *ex post facto* a fresh obligation on a man who has faithfully discharged the original contract, and, therefore, we have to

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxviii., p. 1257.

invite these ex-soldiers of the Queen to return to the colours. We have only in such a case to consider two things—the sufficiency and the fitness of the inducement you extend and the loyalty of those who, having once had the honour of serving the country, are likely to covet that honour once more. The response has been magnificent. We asked the men to notify their desire to serve by letter and to enrol on the 7th of March. On Friday, the 9th of March, 16,097 had responded, and on Saturday, the day before yesterday, the number had risen to 17,480 men. Of those 12,637 are for infantry and 2,222 artillery. The question of Landwehr has been so often discussed that, perhaps, I may say a word or two about it. It is quite clear, as I have said, that we had no claim on these men, there was no obligation upon them, they had had no retainer; and I am not quite convinced it would have been wise to put such an obligation upon men extending to so late a period of life. Our military system and our Army Act only contemplate a total engagement of twelve years. That engagement is entered upon, as a rule, at eighteen or nineteen years of age, but the men whom we have invited back are to be up to forty-five years of age. Now would it be wise, even if it were possible, to invite a young man of eighteen or nineteen to bind himself to make this tremendous sacrifice when he reaches mature manhood? I am not at all sure such a plan would be a sound one. But if that is not done, if you do not invite a youth to enter into this obligation, if you do not give him some compensation for undertaking it or give him some retaining fee, then it is quite clear that when you ask him to make such a great sacrifice you must give him, not merely pay, but what I may call compensation for disturbance; and that is why we feel, without being in the least unfair to soldiers who are serving with the colours at 1s. 3d., we can and we ought to give to these men who come back at their own free will the bounties which are proposed—namely, £12 on returning and £10 at the end of their term of service. That is an emergency scheme, and it is, if you like, a makeshift scheme; we call our scheme an emergency scheme, our critics call it a makeshift scheme. Of course, it is indefinite; but it is very difficult, we find, to satisfy all our critics in this House, and our critics who are so numerous, and in a

certain degree so authoritative, in the press outside. I do not attack those critics. They are in earnest in discussing a problem of national importance. We welcome this new and deep interest in the problem of interior defence; but my case is that the scheme ought to be an emergency scheme, that we ought not to attempt at such a period any final and complete and symmetrical plan for making the whole of the Empire safe until the crack of doom. Why, supposing we had made this Landwehr part of our regular scheme, final, complete, and all embracing, we should have left quite out of account other forces at home, the Militia and Volunteers, which are obviously and admittedly capable of much further development, and which we propose to develop under another portion of this scheme. Now I come to that part of the scheme, and I am able to give details in addition to those I gave the other day. In the first place, as to the improvement of organisation. We intend to divide into two that gentleman who is two gentlemen rolled into one, the Inspector-General of the Auxiliary Forces and the Inspector-General of Recruiting. We mean to have one officer at the War Office in future specially charged with the Auxiliary forces, and we mean to give him a staff—two deputy assistant adjutant-generals, one of whom will be for the Militia and the other for the Volunteers, in fact there will be a separate branch of the War Office to deal with our Auxiliary forces, men who are *personæ græte* with them and who are specially qualified to understand their interests. Part of our scheme with respect to the Militia and the Volunteers is an emergency scheme, but we also have some permanent proposals of which this is one. I think it will be clear to the House that we ought not to prejudice too deeply our permanent proposals for the Auxiliary forces until we have the advantage of the new organisation which we are about to create. It would be absurd to prejudice any question upon which we have not the material to judge rightly and properly. Taking the Militia and outlining our permanent proposals first, I have already announced that we shall give a separate messing in future. That will be permanent. I am not going into great detail as to our permanent proposals, but as far as I do go the House may accept it as permanent. It will be a separate

messing in perpetuity during training. We intend to consolidate, and to increase the bounties which are given to the Militia. For that some additional obligation will have to be undertaken, but I cannot put it too clearly that in asking the Militia to undertake the additional obligation to serve abroad there is no intention, or shadow or intention, on the part of the Government that the Militia shall do garrison duty, or that the Militia shall go abroad during small, or even comparatively large wars. The intention is that in return for the additional bounty the Militia shall be bound to do precisely what they have done during the last few months—namely, come forward during a period of grave Imperial emergency. Then we think that the training of the recruit should be for a longer period than at present—that he should train for six months; and we propose to create a reserve for the Militia, which is a very different thing to the Militia reserve. The Militia Reserve consists in taking away part of the Militia in order to add it to the Army Reserve. We propose to create a Reserve for the Militia by still allowing a Militiaman to purchase his discharge at a very low fee, but by only allowing him to do that if he will undertake the obligation to come back under such circumstances as those I have described. Then we hope to raise some of the disbanded battalions in order that every line battalion should have its proper complement of Militia battalions. We intend to give the Militia full regimental transport, and we shall encourage the Militia, and more especially the officers of Militia, to associate themselves as closely as possible with their linked battalions in the line. We shall give the officers further facilities for instruction, that being one of the means by which we shall bring them into closer touch with their brother officers of the line. That is our permanent proposal for the Militia. Now I come to the emergency part of the scheme. I need not go into it in detail. But the whole Militia is to be embodied; and for that it is to be given better terms this year. The main feature of the scheme is that we offer a bounty of £5 to every ex-Militiaman who re-enlists for this year, and an extra grant to every Volunteer of three years' efficiency who goes into the Militia. We can estimate the cost of the emergency part of the

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Militia scheme closely; we know the number of men that will be embodied, and so we will say that will account for £3,307,000. I now come to the Volunteers. I will deal first with the emergency part of the Volunteer scheme which, as the House knows, is enabling and not mandatory. I wish the House to understand distinctly that this is an emergency scheme for this year and this year only, and that we adopt it in pursuance of the line laid down in the second section of the Volunteer Act, which provides that Volunteers may, of their own accord, offer what is known as actual military service when the Militia is embodied. I wish the House to keep it in mind that it is because we are in a year of emergency; and it is because the Militia are embodied, that we make these emergency proposals with regard to the Volunteers. What are they? We still think that the period of training in camp to be aimed at should be twenty-eight days; but in order to give that latitude which we have promised, the pay and capitation grants will be earned by any Volunteer corps of which half the strength does fourteen days in camp. Is that clear? That is, if there is a corps of 800 men and if 400 do fourteen days in camp, that corps will come inside our emergency scheme; and all the members of the corps—officers, non-commissioned officers, and men—will be paid at Army rates of pay and allowances, and will have a capitation grant of two guineas. But in the case of those corps who do not see their way to come into our emergency scheme, we shall not suspend the ordinary Easter camping. They will be able to camp under the current provisions at Easter if they so desire.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): Is the capitation in addition?

MR. WYNDHAM: The capitation is in addition to the pay.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: Not in addition to the present capitation?

MR. WYNDHAM: In addition to the present Volunteer capitation, but not in addition to the present camping allowance.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): Will the capitation

grant be given to the 800 men if only 400 go into camp?

MR. WYNDHAM: Those who go into camp will earn the capitation grant.

GENERAL LAURIE: Not the remainder?

MR. WYNDHAM: No, I do not think that that will be so, but I do not want to go into too great detail now.

GENERAL LAURIE: It is rather an important detail.

MR. WYNDHAM: Surely, what is more important is the principle that if half the men do the time in camp, they will come in upon the higher scale. Beyond that I am not prepared to go at this moment. The sum of money which we are taking for the Volunteers will be £409,000 for this emergency scheme. Then as to the permanent proposals for the Volunteers, we have on the Estimates, in addition to the £10,000 for ranges last year, a sum of £100,000. We are sending some officers to Switzerland in order to study the Swiss system on the spot. We propose to encourage the scheme associated with the name of Lord Wemyss of Volunteer Reserves to this extent, that we shall give them free ammunition; and although we do not discourage the formation of mounted infantry by Volunteers, more particularly where they do not trench upon the preserves of the Yeomanry, yet, having consulted many Volunteers, we feel that, except in the case of a few corps, the Volunteers will be putting their money on the wrong horse if they go in for mounted infantry. Therefore we propose to encourage them to put their money on bicycles, or rather to put our money on their bicycles, because we shall encourage every Volunteer regiment to form one company of mounted infantry on bicycles. To do that we will give an extra capitation of £2, which will amount to about £50,000 a year. Then we are instituting a Committee of Musketry to deal with this question in connection with the Volunteers. We think that if we can devise a plan of graduated capitation for different degrees of efficiency in musketry the Volunteer might, if I may borrow a phrase from the Universities, pass his "smalls" in musketry at local ranges, and his "greats" at Salisbury Plain or Altcar.

To do that we need to co-operate not only with Volunteer corps, but with public bodies. Again, we intend to give the Volunteers transport upon the same scale as the Militia. We also intend to rearm the Volunteers with modern artillery. But that again is a question I cannot enter into in detail, because it will have to be settled almost battery by battery in accordance with whether a corps is now field artillery or position artillery. But in this £6,228,000 we are taking £750,000 for semi-mobile guns and £50,000 for hutting, for we must take into account the contingency that some of the Army may come back while the Militia are still embodied. I think this is all I have to say upon this point of the emergency scheme. It is a makeshift scheme, if you like to call it that; it is a voluntary scheme, and it is an indefinite scheme; but I think I have defended it from the criticism that has been launched against it upon those scores. I said at the outset, when dealing with the Royal Reserve battalions, that we must not attempt a final scheme of Imperial defence and leave out of account the Militia and Volunteers. But I will go much further, and I will add you can no longer afford to concentrate the whole of your attention upon home defence and home forces alone. If we fall into that error at the instance of some of our critics outside this House who dwell upon conscription, the Militia ballot, and other such new devices, shall we not run the risk of creating a most unfortunate misapprehension in our colonies? May they not think that we care only for our home defence? This is not the moment for a final scheme. We cannot leave out of account forces that may be further developed. We ought not, if I may so put it, to dictate to our home Auxiliary forces; and we ought not to solicit in too pressing a manner our colonies to come to our assistance. What we want are patience and time. We must await the gradual evolution of these forces. If we do that, I for one believe the moment will come for some far-reaching co-ordination of voluntary and reciprocal defence in all parts of our Empire. Some say that our scheme is too small and too voluntary. Others say that our scheme is too large; that we are inviting the auxiliary forces of this country to make too great a sacrifice, and that if they respond to our invitation we shall

dislocate the industry of the country. I think we may set that fear aside. We based this proposal upon some offers which were made to us before we submitted the proposals in the first instance to the House. One Volunteer officer, Colonel Wallace, of the Monmouth Artillery, volunteered three whole batteries of field artillery to train for three months at Aldershot. We accepted that offer, and therefore we were emboldened to proceed with the scheme I have laid before the House. As to the dislocation of industry, we have withdrawn for this war some 75,000 Reservists from their civil avocations, and, judging from the Budget speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day, the machinery for the creation of the wealth of this country has not thereby been seriously impeded. Then, again, we know that many Volunteer battalions at the outset of the war volunteered for an indefinite period to take the place of the Regular battalions as garrisons of some of our towns. So we are constantly assured that we can rely upon the patriotism of the Auxiliary forces and upon the patriotism of the employers of labour in this year, which is a year of emergency. I think the House will see that I have throughout these debates avoided everything in the nature of an alarmist tone. But some of our critics outside misconstrue that attitude altogether. Surely they cannot suppose or believe that a Government which finds itself already obliged to pile up taxation for war would not, in sheer gaiety of spirits, come to this House and ask for £6,228,000 unless they were impressed with the gravity of the situation, and unless they thought there was good reason for asking the taxpayers of the country to make this contribution. Indeed, there is no middle course for those who criticise our scheme. They ought to censure the Government for inviting the House to embark upon a wanton and wasteful expenditure of public money, or else co-operate most earnestly with the Government in order to assist in reaching that measure of preparation which we think it our duty to attain. What is that measure of preparation? We think we ought to organise in the course of the spring and the summer in addition to the Auxiliary forces, who, as I have already pointed out, would keep certain positions

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around London, a trained, organised, and mobile force of three army corps and three cavalry brigades. Nearly everyone agrees that we ought to have a force of about that size and that organisation—but for different reasons. I see that my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Great Yarmouth is taking notes, in order to reply to me this evening—at any rate, I mean to evade him. And I will tell the House why. Somethink (I do not include my hon. and gallant friend in these) we ought to have this strength available so as to be able to resist actual invasion, others to ensure that any threat of invasion shall never be turned into actual invasion, and others again so that all honest fellows should be able to go about their business without troubling their heads about invasion at all. And others, amongst whom I include my hon. and gallant friend, think that both the fact and the fear of invasion are alike chimerical, but that we ought to have this force to deal a counter-stroke at the enemy, when the Navy is humbled in the dust—or rather in the sea. I am glad it is no part of my duty to convince any three of these four schools of thought that they are wrong and that the fourth is in the right. It is quite sufficient for my purpose that they all desire the same thing, and the thing they desire is the scheme which the Government propose. There can be only two questions affecting the Government in this matter. The first is—Are we to blame for not having a force, so organised, ready in our hand? I confidently say we are not. Since the Government has been in office it has submitted certain increases in the Army from year to year. When my right hon. friend the present Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs occupied the place which I now hold he had to employ strenuous arguments to prove to the House that those increases were necessary. But the House voted them, and altogether, apart from any addition in the Estimates of this year, in the programmes from 1897 to last year, an addition was made to the permanent establishment of this country of 28,763 men. Because the Government has made these additions to the Army, we are now reaping the harvest of those efforts. We are able to do all that the Government had ever undertaken to do—that is to say, we were able to send out from this country to South Africa a force of two army corps, troops for the

lines of communications, and a division of cavalry. We did more than that, for we sent to South Africa two additional brigades of cavalry, five additional batteries of artillery, and one additional battalion of infantry. That being so, they are no longer here. On the 1st of August last there were six and a half battalions of infantry in South Africa and 75 at home. Now there are 78 battalions in South Africa and only seven at home. How could anything else occur? That is the whole of the story. I have said often that I invite suggestions and criticism of our proposals, but I do hold that attacks on the Government for the absence of troops are neither critical nor suggestive. They are lamentations, they are jeremiads, they are the voice of Rachel weeping for her children because they are not. Of course they are not; they have been sent out to South Africa. The only other question which can be suggested is whether we have some reasonable prospect of organising such a force during the spring and summer by the methods which we propose. I think if the House will recollect the response we have already had for the Royal Reserve battalions; if they will consider that there are 88 battalions of Militia in this country and the facilities we are going to give them and the patriotism they have already displayed; if they will consider what may be done with the Volunteers with the new facilities which we offer, I think they will agree with me that out of so wide an area of selection it will go hard with us if the Adjutant-General is not able to work up to a proper state of efficiency 75 battalions of infantry. I do not propose to deal with the artillery, the cavalry, the Royal Engineers, the Army Service Corps, or the Army Ordnance Corps, which are permanent additions to the Army, because, as I understand, there is a very general assent to those additions. I come now to the permanent part of our scheme. That is the hardest part of my task, not, as I think, in order to justify the additions, but because it is rather difficult to explain to the House the way in which they are presented in the Estimates. If hon. Members will take the first column marked A "Normal" they will see a sum of £21,777,700. That is an increase of £1,160,500 upon the Estimates of last year. My first fear is that the House may think that we are, by some insidious means, add-

ing yet another and a surreptitious augmentation to the Army under this column, while we have put the ostentatious permanent additions in the column which stands next. But I assure the House that that is not so. Of this increase £424,000 is accounted for by the portion of the whole scheme which has been voted and which falls to be completed this year—the programmes of 1897-98, 1898-99, 1899-1900. These mean the necessity of there being an increase of 6,539 additional men this year at the cost of £424,000. The men have all been raised, but they come upon the Estimates for the first time now. Then every year it is the duty of the Adjutant-General to present some changes in the establishment to the Secretary of State. These changes, which show a balance on the side of augmentation, account for another £203,000 of this addition to the normal Estimate. Perhaps the House will take it from me that there are only two items which really demand any explanation. One is the increase of 912 engineers. I cannot really distinguish between these 912 engineers and a further number of engineers which we are asking for as a permanent addition to the Army, except in this way, that in any case the Adjutant-General would have asked for that 912 even if there had been no new scheme of increase for the Army. They were complementary to the numbers of the Army as they already existed, and they have been rendered necessary because of the great increase in the use of searchlights about our harbours and even in the field. There is one other proposal which I ought not to keep back from the House. That is that the garrison of Mauritius will in future consist of one British battalion and of two battalions of the native Indian infantry. We are not borrowing those battalions from India. They will provide, for the first time, a very small foreign-service roster for the native Indian army. India will raise two more native battalions than she would otherwise do, and we will take them from her, just as India takes from us the 52 white battalions. To account for the remainder of this increase on the normal estimates there is a sum of £533,500 which is really for automatic and miscellaneous services. All that money, with one exception, is due solely to the fluctuations in prices or to a change in the date of payment. For example, so large a sum

as £275,000 arises from the fact that this year we are paying the whole of the Volunteer capitation grant out of the Estimates for the year, and not one-half of it by a Supplementary Estimate—a course which has frequently been urged on the Government and which we have now decided to take. The only item in this large demand which imposes a new obligation which is in any sense a point of policy is covered by a sum of £48,000, but I must tell the House that this is the first instalment of what will prove to be a much larger sum. It is for increasing and distributing the store accommodation for clothing and munitions of war. We have been going very carefully into that question, we have been sitting from day to day, in fact, upon that question. We are determined that the outbreak of war shall never again find this country with such a small reserve of stores and munitions of war. But if you increase that reserve you have to increase the storehouses in which it would be placed, and since it would be folly, and indeed impossible, to pile up such reserve in Pimlico, it will be conveniently distributed in various parts of the United Kingdom. That is a question of policy which will involve a great deal of expenditure. This accounts for the whole of this increase on the normal estimate. There is nothing in it which need engage the attention of the House, except the borrowing of the two battalions from India for colonial stations, and this determination on our part to increase the reserves of stores and munitions of war.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): No part of the cost of those two battalions will fall on India, I suppose?

MR. WYNDHAM: Oh, no. I now come to the permanent additions which are set forth in column B. There is a sum of £1,925,000 for permanent additions to the British Army. I may say that £900,000 of that is for prime charges, and though there will be some further prime charges next year, that will be a diminishing sum in the future. If these additions are made we shall have in this country, when the whole Army is at home, the artillery for five army corps. There is an addition, as the House knows, of twelve infantry battalions. I do not know whether I am right or wrong, but I have gathered the belief that there is a general, though not a universal, consensus

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of opinion that all these additions might be sanctioned with the possible exception of these infantry battalions. I will then confine myself to this point. Why twelve battalions? I may be asked; and, in the second place, I may be asked, is this addition due to a recent policy of Imperial expansion? I remember a number of hon. Members in this House saying that these Estimates would mount up and that we would have to make this increase because of our jingoism and adventurous policy in all parts of the earth. If that were so it would be a very serious state of affairs; but I believe it is possible utterly to demolish the figment, for it is no more than a figment, that these increases in the Army are in any way due to any recent policy. Let us first see what is agreed. I think it is agreed that, dealing with the infantry of the Regular Army, we ought to have as many battalions at home as there are abroad. That has been the idea aimed at by this and preceding Governments for more than thirty years. If that is so we have only to agree, if we can, upon the number of battalions abroad and the necessity for them, and then by doubling that number we shall arrive at the proper figure of the infantry battalions of the Regular British Army. India first claims our attention. Is it true that our presence in India is due to a recent policy of Imperial expansion? Of course not. The battalions of the army of occupation in India account for fifty-two infantry battalions. Will anybody say there is any prospect of reducing the garrison in India? Then there is Egypt. Is our presence there due to recent Imperial escapades? It was the predecessors of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite who went to Egypt in 1882, and no one has ever been able to find the time or the occasion for withdrawing—and no one ever will. And what is the infantry garrison of Egypt? Three battalions. Will anybody say there is any prospect of, or that there would be any wisdom in, attempting to reduce that microscopic force? That makes fifty-five infantry battalions which must always be abroad in the armies of occupation in India and Egypt. Now we come to our colonial stations—purely naval stations. First there is Gibraltar. We are not in Gibraltar in consequence of any recent Imperial tendencies. We went there as long ago as 1704, and we are not likely to abandon Gibraltar. We have recently been

full of elation over the siege and relief of Ladysmith. Why, the siege of Gibraltar lasted for three years and seven months, and because it happened over a hundred years ago is that any reason why we should not vibrate with patriotism over the courage of the men who sustained that siege? The garrison of Gibraltar is but three infantry battalions. Then there is Malta. Is the occupation of Malta due to a jingo policy of recent birth and development? We became responsible for Malta in 1800 after a blockade which lasted for two years, during which we co-operated with the people of that island to oust the troops of the First Napoleon, and a monument commemorating that event stands in the square of Valetta to this day, on which is inscribed their gratitude to this country. The garrison of Malta is seven infantry battalions. Does anybody say that we ought to or can safely diminish that force when you consider the vast stores of guns and other material there? Why, Sir, seven battalions is but a corporal's guard. Then there is Mauritius. We went there in 1810, when there was an expedition under Lord Minto from India. Mauritius accounts for only one battalion. Will anybody say that we should abandon that station which is on the route to the Cape, India, and Australia? Then there is Halifax. There is not much recent Imperialism about our occupation of Halifax. We first went there in 1447, and after it had been lost and re-taken, and ceded and receded several times, it has finally been ours ever since the Peace of Utrecht in 1713. I mean to go on if I may, because hon. Members think it enough to get up and say that these garrisons and increases are due to our recent policy of Imperial expansion. I find them due to the adventurers of Elizabeth, to the empire of adventure, or to the prophetic instinct which has given us the very cornerstone of our present Empire. Then there is Bermuda. The first Englishman went there in 1593, and it was finally colonised in 1620 as an offshoot from Virginia, and in these days when we are criticised, and properly criticised, for not having a sufficient reserve of stores, may I remind hon. Members that Bermuda was once defended by Henry Moore against two Spanish ships with three cannon balls. Two of them were fired and the Spanish ships retired, the station being left with one cannon ball as a reserve of ammunition. That is

the way we muddled through in the old days. Then there is Jamaica. That jingo Oliver Cromwell went there in 1655. Then there are Barbados and St. Lucia. The latter was taken four times. Are we to give up these islands, with which such historic names as Rodney, Abercrombie, and Sir John Moore are associated? For those three stations the garrison is but one battalion of infantry. St. Lucia is one of the most important cable stations, and day by day we are directing our attention more closely to cables and cable stations. Then there is Ceylon. It was taken in 1796, Singapore was taken in 1819, and the occupation of Hong Kong dates from 1841. Each of these places has one battalion. In the whole of this chain can anyone discover any trace of a recent policy of expansion and Imperialism? Some of these places were captured in the hot heat of our contest against Napoleon, and perhaps those who took them did not know at the time how useful and of what practical import they would be; for they are the nerve centres of that network of naval stations and cables which is the only thing which binds together our vast Empire and gives it unity and strength. If hon. Members will add the strength of those garrisons up they will find it amounts to 17 battalions, which, added to the 55 in India and Egypt, make 72 battalions abroad. It appears from the memorandum issued by my noble friend that on June 1 last, instead of 17 battalions there were only 13½ at those colonial stations. We had to borrow one-fifth, because whereas South Africa, which so far has been left out of the account, was only entitled to two battalions for naval stations, we had at that time 6½ battalions there. But will anybody seriously contend that it is any longer right or safe to shuffle or borrow on this narrow margin of 17 battalions for those naval stations? I am prepared to admit that these 6½ battalions scraped together were not enough in South Africa. I believe that in the opinion of many men it was the fact that the garrisons stood so low that led to the growth of a misconception in the minds of the Dutch inhabitants of South Africa as to our real strength. We must measure the size of our garrisons by our interests, obligations, and risks. You cannot be put off by the argument that South Africa is composed of self-governing colonies, and that we were never to give garrisons to self-

governing colonies. You must consider the situation; and where the colonies are continental and contiguous to the domain of a military Power, then a fresh element comes in, and that is why in these Estimates we propose to put down the normal garrison of South Africa at 12 infantry battalions. If you will add that number to 72 you will arrive at 84 infantry battalions. Three of these can be under our existing arrangements provided by the Guards. That leaves 81, and, therefore, the proper figure should be 162 battalions of British infantry altogether. But we must have regard to the difficulties of recruiting, and we may cherish the hope that when the idea of the creation of auxiliary forces in our colonies is fulfilled, it may be possible to diminish that garrison of 12 battalions. I heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth greet that announcement with an ironical cheer. Will he say that we are in South Africa in consequence of recent Imperial expansion? We have undertaken no new obligations, but no matter what Government may be in office, the nation are determined that the old obligation shall be fulfilled. They are determined to act in the manner which is due to the sacrifices made by their forefathers, which is due to themselves, and due, above all, to our fellow-subjects in the colonies. The fabric of this Empire is only held together by the ocean courses of our warships. They are, as it were, the invisible girders supporting the Empire, and these naval stations are the points on which the girders rest, and it is the duty of this country to hold them until the young nations growing up in our colonial dependencies can relieve the mother country of some portion of that duty. That is my answer given in anticipation of any criticism of this permanent addition to the British infantry. It is also my answer to those critics who outside the House urge upon us to embark on a course of conscription or Militia ballot. Can you supply the garrison we require by any other than a voluntary system, which gives you comparatively young men enlisted for a short term of service? Yours must be a voluntary system. Take the figures for last January, before this increase was contemplated—you will find that, while you had 107,000 Regulars at home, you had 118,000 abroad. No tyrant since the days of Nebuchadnezzar has ever thought it possible to deport such

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a population as that except of their own free will. Your system must also be one of comparatively short service. I speak after being profoundly impressed as an *ex officio* member of the board of the commissioners of Chelsea Hospital, and having read the melancholy returns which are brought up each month of men whose health has been ruined for ever, I am profoundly convinced that five years is long enough for any man to serve in such places. If you keep him there longer he ceases to be a good and therefore an economical soldier, and he becomes a burden in the future. If you are tempted to embark upon any long service system you will burden yourselves with a whole army of pensioners and invalids. Those are the conditions upon which the whole of our Regular system hinges. You have got to bear it. We are obliged to have eighty-four Regular Battalions of infantry, twelve Cavalry Regiments, and fifty-two Batteries of Artillery abroad. That is the position we have to face, and we shall not be able to face it unless we make up our minds to adhere to our present system. Even if it were possible to divide the two problems and consider the home question apart from the foreign question, would it be wise to depart from our present system of short service and Reserves? The Reserves stand, as the normal figure to be aimed at, at 90,000 men. To give barrack accommodation to one soldier costs you £120. Now, I do ask the House and our critics outside to consider this. Can they think any reasonable Government would invite the taxpayers of this country to sink £10,800,000 in providing barrack accommodation for trained men who wish to live at home, who wish to marry, who wish to enter into civic avocations, and who yet, as the experience of the last three months has shown, have all, with an infinitesimal exception of one per cent, responded at a moment's notice to the call to take part in a sanguinary war, 7,000 miles away from these shores? That is the defence I humbly submit of our present system. Let us perfect that system by all means. Let us search out its failings without fear or favour, but do not let us, in a moment of exasperation, such as was experienced some weeks ago, or in a moment of excitement which seems to have overtaken some of our critics outside, throw away the ripe fruit of thirty years' endeavour and of steady approximation

towards success. I dare to put it as high as that. But I do not put it higher. I never have said everything is perfect. When we enumerate what is called the credit side of the ledger, we are accused of ignoring the debit side altogether. No, I say even the most sanguine may have to wait for years before they can say all is satisfactory; but when, by finding adequate inducements and by reforms in the methods of recruiting, the changed attitude of the people towards the career of the soldier is maintained, when the wrongs of South Africa are righted and the soldier is not slighted, when, in consequence of these changes, we can have a backing of some 60,000 recruits in each year for the Regular Army, when from the home Army we can send at a moment's notice two army corps fully equipped, with reserves, stores, and munitions, so that they may be maintained indefinitely without effort in the field, and when from the four corners of the Empire, which lie wholly or mainly within the temperate zone, at home, in Canada, in South Africa, and in Australia, we see Auxiliary forces growing up and being trained to take their place beside our Regulars—then, and then only, can we rest content. But the road to that goal is the one upon which our feet are set; we cannot miss it if we only persevere. Sir, I beg to move.

Motion made, and Question put, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): The Under Secretary of State for War, in a speech of extraordinary charm and ability, such as he always makes to this House, has answered criticisms which have not been made and critics who do not exist. He passed over all those questions which are most dangerous, and which those in this House who take most interest in this subject most desired to hear about. The right hon. Gentleman has been skating on thin ice during the whole of his speech, and I shall now have to discharge the painful duty of drawing attention to what we consider are the doubtful parts of his proposals, and of trying to elicit a reply to the criticisms which he has not touched at all. The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by pointing out the fourfold nature of the proposals he was making, and he told the House that the Leader of the Opposition has announced his inten-

tion of not contesting the war proposals of the Government. He made allusion to the most doubtful of the items, and deprecated all discussion upon them. But there is one item in the first Vote to which I must draw attention—an item of £3,000,000 for the pay of the South African Volunteers. That is an enormous item, so great that we do not know how it could possibly be incurred. That is for pay alone, there is no provision for anything else, and we are told to-night that the number of South African Volunteers is 21,000, and that a margin has been allowed up to 25,000. This is an enormous cost for such a force compared with the cost of the home troops; and to this matter I must call attention, because the home soldier is fighting side by side with these men; and of all the incentives to discontent there is none greater than the feeling on the part of the home soldier that he is not paid so well as the men along with whom he is fighting. That item of £3,000,000 is one which we shall be able to consider when we come to the Vote, but it is impossible to consider an item upon which discussion has been deprecated, without taking into account its effect upon recruiting, which is an effect the difficulty of which we shall see in time to come. The Under Secretary has again avoided, as on all former occasions, telling the House of Commons what are the conditions of service of the Royal Reserve battalions which constitute so large a portion of the Government's temporary or emergency proposals. Although I think the right hon. Gentleman spoke six times in eight days earlier in the session, he did not tell us anything with regard to this in any of his speeches. The Secretary of State for War in another place made a statement to the effect that these men were to be confined to home service, but some of us who have a strong objection to military measures being taken for home defence as contrasted with other purposes strongly deprecate the formation of a military force which is to be confined to home service, and which cannot be conveyed abroad. It is, in our opinion, a retrograde proposal which ought to be opposed. There is not the smallest sign in the Estimates that the Government has taken into consideration the real problem of the defence of the country—the question whether it is not wiser or more expedient for defence purposes to spend money on the Fleet or

upon measures of the kind that is now proposed. There are many of us here who believe that, if it is in fact necessary, which we doubt, to take local steps in order to protect the country from the danger of invasion, it would be better to spend this money on shallow-water ships—torpedo destroyers, and the like. That is an arguable contention, but to tell us that the country is obliged to spend a million and a half a year for a force which cannot go abroad only goes to show that panic really exists. This proposal was described by the Under Secretary for War as a makeshift proposal. It is more; it is an extravagant makeshift proposal, and one which is calculated to damage the Militia, which the Government say is a force which they desire to develop and improve, because a great many of these men will go into the Reserve regiments and get there £22 bounty, while the men who have joined the Militia will receive no bounty at all. These are proposals which the House will have a further opportunity in Committee of dealing with, and the first observation I have to make is that the permanent increase charge will be far greater than we are at present willing to allow. Stores and fortress armament will be greatly increased, and in the future there will have to be a greater increase of infantry for South Africa, or else of Australian and Canadian forces. The Under Secretary for War defended his increase of twelve battalions of infantry. The increase of twelve battalions of infantry means under the linked battalion system an increase of six battalions which could be sent abroad in time of peace. We are already four battalions in excess abroad in peace; the net increase over previous needs is therefore only two, and does anybody suppose that South Africa will only require an increase of two battalions of the Regular Army? But there is a solution of that which has been hinted at, which is that the new Australian force—not the original force, but the one which is now being asked for by the Government—is intended ultimately for garrison work in South Africa. Such a force would be enormously costly—much more so than home battalions would be, and the House will be living in a fool's paradise if it accepts this increase of twelve battalions which in reality only means two for the purposes of sending abroad. No one who has followed these figures can say that the future permanent

charge is shown in these Estimates at all, and it is evident that we must be prepared for greater sacrifices in the future. The Under Secretary has not indulged in the somewhat grandiloquent phrases as to War Office management of the present war which have been used by some members of the Government. On the contrary, his account differed from the accounts given outside the House and given in the House during the course of our debates. That was when the existing system was defended, and the right hon. Gentleman defended it. In the conclusion of his speech he said it was necessary to consider what the present system has given us in the present war. The Leader of the House in his Manchester speech* over and over again stated that the present system could give us three army corps, and over and over again he boasted that it had given us not only two army corps but three "without a hitch." On that ground I say the speech of the Under Secretary differs from the speeches delivered outside this House. Of course, it is certain that that number of men were sent out, but how were those army corps made up? They were made up partly by drawing troops from India, and partly by drawing troops from the colonies. There never was a doubt as to our power to find a great number of infantry. That was never disputed for a moment, but an army corps is not composed exclusively of infantry. Some time ago the Secretary of State drew up a scheme in which there were eight army corps, but the scheme was afterwards ridiculed even by the War Office. The First Lord of the Treasury, in his speech at Manchester, said that the critics had failed because three army corps had been sent to South Africa fully equipped with munitions and stores, but the statement differs very widely from what we have now heard; and indeed, the First Lord's declarations will not stand the test of examination for a moment. The House will remember the main case of the reformers in this House against the War Office for the last two years has been on the point of the mounted branches, and both in 1897 and 1899 Amendments were moved in respect of those matters. Has the war shown that those criticisms were wrong or right? Have they been proved or disproved? They have been

* Speech of Mr. A. J. Dalfour, at Conservative Club, Manchester, 10th January, 1900.

Sir Charles Dilke.

proved in every particular. As late as the 21st of July last year, just previous to the outbreak of the war, we went into the question of the Government supply of cavalry, artillery, and the auxiliary branches for the purpose of making up army corps in detail in this House,* and we showed that the establishment as regarded the horses had been starved; that it contained about 12,500 horses over five years of age of which the artillery horses numbered about 4,500. Nearly 1,000 fewer than there were in 1878, twenty-one years ago. How does it work out under the test of war? We are short of cavalry and artillery. The army of Sir George White was supplied from India, and the command of Sir Redvers Buller was short of guns. Everyone in the House knows what that means; and the brilliant moves of General French shows the value of horses in the field. The right hon. Gentleman laughs, but this is a serious matter, and should be considered both in its present and future bearing in order that what has occurred on this occasion shall not be allowed to occur again. Then, as to guns, the case which has been put forward is capable of conclusive proof. The critics of the War Office year after year have said that we were short of guns, and the War Office, bit by bit, has been drawn on to admit the truth of the statements. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury should have been advised to say, as he did at Manchester, that the Government had sent out at the time sufficient artillery for three army corps of Regular troops. Here are the words he used. Speaking of equipment, the right hon. Gentleman said—

“So long as you are determined [to have a voluntary army alone] you cannot expect to put into the field a much larger or a better equipped force.”

And on another occasion, on the 8th of January, he said†—

“We have at this moment in South Africa the infantry, cavalry, and artillery of three army corps of Regular soldiers.”

Now what is the necessary amount of guns for three army corps? I asked a question as to how many guns at the date named were in South Africa in British hands, and the reply was 186 guns—but three

army corps need 360 guns. We had nothing like the number of guns which, under even the low scale, ought to have accompanied the troops. When the First Lord of the Treasury said on January 8—“We have at this moment in South Africa the infantry, cavalry, and artillery of three army corps” he made an entirely misleading statement, for which, however, I do not hold the right hon. Gentleman responsible, but whoever at the War Office furnished the right hon. Gentleman with that information was attempting to mislead the country. The facts are entirely different. It is alleged by the War Office that we could not be expected to put into the field a better equipped force. Now, what is the most essential part of the equipment of a force? I should say the ammunition columns. As to the equipment of the troops, the ammunition columns, after those of the First Army Corps, were not equipped as they ought to have been, and the result of the way in which the troops were sent out was that not until February was Lord Roberts able to begin his northward movement. The greater the credit that is given to the Army the less credit must be given to the War Office, which has always expected the Army to do the impossible. It has been alleged that the War Office has every reason to be proud, because some part of its system has turned out better than one could reasonably expect. It was said that the critics were afraid the reserves would not come up, but they came up in 1882 and 1885. There does not exist a single Member of the House who is opposed to the reserve system as it is, though most of us are opposed to the system by which it is desired that the men should be increased without increasing the equipment. Most of our troubles in the present war have been directly attributable to inefficient equipment and supply of horses. As to the part borne by our colonies, is it not a reflection on our Government that no preparation has ever been made in time of peace for a system on which the colonies could join us in time of war? The Under Secretary expressed the hope that some system would be arranged for the future.

MR. WYNDHAM: I said that it was for the colonies to make suggestions. It is wholly for them to make suggestions, and I feel strongly that suggestions made in this House are the most mischievous that could be made.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxiv., commencing at p. 1614.

† Speech of Mr. A. J. Balfour, at Drill Hall, Ardwick, Manchester, 8th January, 1900.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: As it is now certain that the colonies would join us in any great war in the future, would it not be well to arrange for such co-operation in time of peace? But the Government has taken steps in the opposite direction by cutting down in 1896 the contributions from the tropical colonies in the East towards defence. It is impossible to consider the present system apart from the question of its cost, and the system is condemned by its cost, present and prospective, and by the difficulty of obtaining recruits. In 1897 the cost of the defence of the British Empire was 63 millions sterling, even when the rupee is reckoned at its selling value. In the present year the cost of the peace defence of the Empire is 75 millions and a half. But if, according to the Treasury's view, the rupee is to be reckoned as having the full purchasing power in the East of 2s., then the cost for the year in peace—that is apart from war expenditure—is 81 millions and a half. And that enormous expenditure, so vastly greater than that of any other Power in the world, is not complete, for it does not allow for a future increase of the garrison in South Africa and for a necessary rearmament. As to the system of recruiting, the Government professes to be extending the three-years system, but the Under-Secretary has systematically avoided the point in his speeches, although he knows the anxiety of this House on the subject. But it is impossible to say that the three-years system is being given a fair chance as long as the extra 3d. a day given to the ordinary recruits and to the Militia is denied to the three-years men. The Under Secretary of State defended more strongly than I think necessary, even for him, the existing system of the War Office. Many of us had great hopes of the right hon. Gentleman, because he came into office with an open mind, but I am afraid now that his eyes have been closed to reform. I have a recollection of a speech he made in July last, when he spoke of the system as an antiquated one, but he said there was no alternative which gave us a better system unless it were a system like that of the Swiss militia. I am glad that the Government are not proposing to-night any general reform of our military system at a time when war is pending, and while they have avoided an appeal from this House to some of those Commissions and Committees who would only tell us what

we know already, yet I regret that the Under Secretary should have shown so strong and continued an adherence to what he calls the existing system.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I need not say that I have no desire to throw difficulties in the way of the Government, or to criticise in an unfair spirit the statement so admirably made by my hon. friend the Under Secretary of State for War. I should not like at the present time to say anything to embarrass the Government, nor am I likely to do so. It would be most ungracious to be wanting in admiration of the ability the hon. Gentleman has shown, and of the grasp he has taken of the subject. I have said on former occasions that the proposals of the Government are makeshift proposals. Well, others have said so, and my hon. friend has taken that remark not in very good part. I do not quarrel with the Government for not having submitted a comprehensive and permanent scheme. They had to get through the war into which they were suddenly hurled with the existing machinery, and that existing machinery has turned out better than many expected of it. It has produced magnificent results; it has accomplished far more than was claimed for it by its authors. We have been able to place division after division of magnificent troops in the field, and the reserves on which we have had to rely for making up our regiments and units for war service have come up almost in full force, with hearty readiness and self-devotion on the part of the men who belong to them. Some of us may have seen in the last few days two battalions who are about to leave these shores as part of the Eighth Division, following the masses of men who have been sent to South Africa. It must have been a great pleasure and pride to those who witnessed those magnificent battalions to know that in no sense did those battalions fall behind those who have preceded them. In fact, I make bold to say that those battalions are worthy units of the *corps d'élite* of the Army. We know that there is a large unexpended reserve of the same corps at the back of these battalions, with which even fresh reinforcements could be fitted out. Certainly no one has ever suggested as expedient for the defence of this country, and still less for foreign service, anything like

conscription. I have heard words wasted by some of the Government speakers in disclaiming all ideas of conscription. Who, I should like to know, has ever advocated conscription for foreign service? It is not the time to discuss any alternative system, but there are many who, like myself, are desirous of supporting the Government in carrying out the measures which they consider best in the circumstances, yet who would have been glad to have seen some more comprehensive and national plan. There is no doubt that the present war has strained our resources. We have not only sent very nearly all our regular army into the field, but we have had to supplement for subsidiary service men whom the right hon. Baronet opposite not too harshly described as being little prepared for war. It cannot but be a great mistake and an absolute cruelty to send into the field against an able enemy men who had received so little military training that they cannot even be regarded as half soldiers. The devotion of our people is unlimited; their readiness to face death and suffering in any degree is to be found among all classes, and has been largely relied upon, and I think it would be the greatest misfortune to this country if it supposed it could improvise an army in case of national danger. Your citizens may be trained and drilled so that they could form an army for national defence, but training and drill are absolutely necessary. You cannot call up men from peaceful avocations who have no military training, and place them in the field. That would mean disaster and disgrace to our arms, and the disgrace would not be upon those who failed in the country's cause, but upon those who relied on unprepared forces to maintain the honour of the country. I trust that no great emergency may find us so little prepared, and that the measures which the Government have proposed may lead to a more efficient preparation of our Auxiliary forces, so that in time to come we may rely upon them to take their place in the second line and support the Regular Army of the country. The present is not the time for details, but nevertheless I cannot but call attention to the measures which are being taken by the War Office for the provision of young officers for the Army—measures which are unfair and unsatisfactory. When I think of the exertions that have been

made by the War Office, and, I am sure, the unsparing efforts which those at the head of the Army have made to carry on this war, I regret to criticise it in any particular, but I think in the matter to which I call the attention of the House they have made a mistake. I have put some questions to the representatives of the War Office lately upon the intention of the Government to give commissions to University men, public school boys, and young men from the colonies in supersession of the cadets of the Royal Military Academy and the Royal Military College. We have for a long time been endeavouring to officer the Army by scientific and educated men, requiring them to enter our military colleges by severe competition, which has necessitated a long, careful, and expensive preparation. Only a portion of those who get the qualifying number of marks enter these institutions. I think it is unfair and unjust that young men who have entered those institutions should be superseded by others who have had no military education whatever. It is a disadvantage to the Army that men should receive commissions by favour or by selection who had no military training, and supersede those cadets who have all their life been preparing for the Army. After the war there will be a certain reduction in the number of officers employed. Promotion is always slower after a war, and those young cadets who have entered a military college by competition will find themselves possibly prevented from ever attaining the higher ranks through their having been superseded by men who have received no military training whatever. I think that is unfair, and it is not calculated to keep up that improvement in the service which has been sought for so many years in our system of military education. What appears to be the worst feature of this system is that men are actually, I am assured, being admitted into direct commissions in the Army who have failed in the entrance examinations of those institutions in the last few years, and they are superseding the cadets, actually for all time, and going above those who have defeated them in open competition in the military colleges. I cannot conceive anything more unjust and inexpedient. I have put questions on the subject which have been answered by the Financial Secretary to the War Office. I venture to think that the hon. Member had better be a little more

candid, and not so facetious in his replies. The other evening* I asked him if it was a case that direct commissions were being given to university men, colonists, and boys from the public schools, and whether they could supersede the cadets in the military colleges. The hon. Gentleman replied that those who received commissions from the universities and the colonists would be really older than the cadets in the military colleges, but he dropped out of his answer any reference to the boys in the public schools. I have had to answer questions in the House, and if at any time I was unable to give a full answer, I have always told the House so. I do not know whether the answer I have received is ingenuous. To-night I asked him whether if the candidates from the universities and the colonies are over twenty years of age, the boys in the public schools to whom commissions are being offered would also be older than the cadets of the military colleges. I do not think the hon. Member answered the question. It is not fair that cadets who have received expensive military preparation should be superseded by boys from public schools who have no military education at all. It is perfectly easy for the War Office to extend the means of preparation, and I put it whether it would not be expedient to give a short military course to the numbers of young men who are anxious to serve either in the Army, the Militia, or the Volunteers. I have also asked why commissions have not been offered to men who have qualified though not succeeded in recent examinations, and finally, whether this difficulty had not been met in the Crimean War by allowing cadets in the Royal Military Academy to pass the examinations in a year and a-half instead of three years, probably requiring a little more exertion on their part. The hon. Gentleman replied that he could not go into matters of history. I think that in the case of the War Office, which is guided very much by precedent, it certainly was not a very proper reply, and I would suggest that it was far better to let these young men enter the Army with shorter preparation than to take young men from the universities and the colonies without any military preparation whatever. It is extremely hard upon parents,

many of whom have strained their private means to prepare their sons for the competitions in these institutions, to find their sons superseded by young men who get their commissions nobody knows how—by favour in many instances and good luck perhaps in others, but certainly not on any principle of fairness or for the advantage of the service which they proposed to enter. I think the matter ought to be considered and ought to be properly understood, and ought not to be approved of either in the House or the country. I trust the objectors to it will not be put off by flippant or evasive answers.

*MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I wish to say a few words on the unpopular subject of £ s. d. and on the proposals for the permanent increase of the Army. The hon. Gentleman has made, as he always does, a most attractive speech, and he has dealt with the various topics with which he had to deal in a most lucid and artistic way. There was one subject to which he did not devote his attention, and that was the question of the cost of those beautiful schemes which he and the Department he represents are continually laying before this House. I would ask the House to consider what all this is really going to cost the country. We don't really get set before us the full cost of the military expenditure of this country. We had this year laid before us in the Estimates a charge amounting to £60,000,000 for the war. But the ordinary expenditure showed an increase of £3,000,000, so that the ordinary expenditure amounts to nearly £24,000,000. That is not all, for we will find in another page of the Estimates military expenditure borne on the Civil Service Estimates amounting to £300,000 or £400,000. There is also an expenditure of a million of money under the Military Works Act, these two items making together a total of nearly a million and a half of money. This is not all, for the House will remember, for it was mentioned in the debate last year, that this by no means embraces the whole of the military expenditure for which the taxpayers of this country have to pay. There is a large amount of military expenditure under the Colonial Office. There are no less than 20,000 troops under the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, paid by this country at a charge of something like a million per annum.

* See page 376 of this volume.

Sir J. Fergusson.

The normal military expenditure, therefore, of this year, excluding war charges, is something like £26,000,000, and it is an increasing charge. I should like to ask the hon. Gentleman's attention to this point—that in the statement he has laid before us he does not state the full charges he is placing upon the country. In the memorandum which the Secretary of State laid before the House, he tells us that there are a good many of the Estimates which are not complete Estimates—that is to say that they do not really forecast the total charge. There is an incompleteness in regard to the Volunteer charges, but there is a much more important want which was referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean with respect to the charge for warlike stores. The hon. Gentleman said the sum stated in the Estimates represented a small part of the expenditure to be incurred on this account. I do not think he pointed out how enormously in times past this item has increased. Two years ago it amounted to £2,000,000, last year it was £2,500,000, and this year it is 3,250,000. This is likely to increase in time to come at a still more rapid rate. There is a further expenditure not accounted for in the Estimates, and that is referred to at page 7 of the memorandum, where the Secretary of State tells us that no provision is made for barrack accommodation for the additional forces the Government intend to raise. We know very well the great expense of barrack accommodation, and we know from past experience how very serious an item it forms in our expenditure. I do not intend to say anything about the charges for the war itself. We have discussed them before, and we are perfectly prepared to grant to the Government any increase of money they want, and to hold them responsible for making proper use of it. I think the hon. Gentleman has shown a desire to meet the reasonable views of Members in all quarters of the House in giving us more particulars regarding the war expenditure than he has hitherto done. I think that he might go further. The actual pay for the colonial forces amounts to £3,300,000, while the ordinary pay of the British Army is only £5,000,000. Here we are asked to vote, without any knowledge whatever of the

details, over three millions of money for these most excellent forces. No doubt they are comparatively small in numbers as compared with the Regular forces. I hope the hon. Gentleman will give us some further particulars with respect to this item in the Estimates. I want to say something about the permanent increase of the Army—that is to say, the proposals included in column B, upon which the hon. Gentleman dwelt in the last half of his speech. What are they going to cost? We are told in the table at the beginning of the Estimates that they are going to entail an additional cost of £1,995,000. They are actually going to cost in this first year, which is practically one of preparation, an extra sum of nearly two millions of money, and as I have endeavoured to point out already, it does not represent the whole cost, for in this column B of the Army Estimates the War Office enter nothing for works. Now the works will include barracks, and will eventually be a considerable item of expenditure in this matter of cost. Another matter refers to the non-effective charges, and these also will involve a considerable increase of cost.

MR. WYNDHAM: That charge could not possibly come into the Estimates this year, and it therefore cannot be dealt with.

*MR. BUCHANAN: It might have been pointed out to us in the memorandum of the Secretary of State for War, the object of which is to set forth in full the consequences likely to ensue upon the adoption of the system he is putting before the country. I only put this before the House because the House is rather apt to believe that an increase of £2,000,000 would represent the whole extra charge involved in the adoption of this scheme. There will be a very much larger charge than that when it comes into operation.

MR. WYNDHAM: Perhaps the hon. Member would rather that I did not interrupt, but reserved my remarks till I reply, but these are merely estimates, and therefore it is impossible to say the exact charge.

*MR. BUCHANAN: That is perfectly true; I did not express myself sufficiently clearly. This House has a right to know, when it is asked to commit itself to an expansion and enlargement of the military forces of the country, what charge will be entailed, not merely this

year, but permanently. It is absurd for the hon. Gentleman speaking for the War Office, where there are such excellent permanent officials, to say—

MR. WYNDHAM: I said nothing of the kind; I said that these were only estimates.

*MR. BUCHANAN: It has been shown in the memorandum of the Secretary of State in previous years, and there can be no reason whatever why it should not be shown this year. The final charge upon the taxpayers may be £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 per annum, and we should have to look forward in a very few years to Army Estimates not of £22,000,000 or £23,000,000 as at present, but of £25,000,000 or £26,000,000, or even of not far short of £30,000,000, when the whole of this scheme is carried into operation. In addition to that, I should like to ask—Is this the time at which the Government should ask the House and the country to sanction a scheme of this sort? Everyone is aware that at this moment the country has special financial burdens imposed upon it for the purpose of carrying through this war, and it is not the time for imposing extra burdens which are not absolutely necessary. Still more would I demur to it being a proper time at which to commit the House to a permanent alteration in our Army system, seeing that as long as the war is progressing we really do not know what our future Imperial responsibilities may be. Various expedients are being and have been resorted to by the Government during the progress of the war which are perfectly justifiable in war time, but which I am by no means prepared to admit are justifiable for adoption into the permanent military system of the country. There is the totally new proposal to take over two native Indian regiments on to the British establishment, while the hon. Gentleman appeared to be going even further than that, for he stated the Government were going to establish a foreign roster in the Indian native army, and that two of the extra native regiments raised by India were to be taken over by Her Majesty's Government. That is a perfectly justifiable expedient in time of war, but we ought not to be asked now to sanction it as a permanent institution in our future military organisation. With regard to the colonial contingents, I entirely agree with what has been said

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as to the very valuable and important aid they have been able to render in the present war, but I submit that we ought not to be expected to commit ourselves to-night, not for this present year only, but for all futurity, to the assumption that the organisation of the military forces of the colonies is part of the regular military organisation of this country. There were one or two observations of the hon. Gentleman which rather aroused my suspicion, such as when he spoke of the possible remodeling of our system of Imperial defence, and when he referred to the evolution of various schemes of colonial defence. Those remarks justify my suspicion that there is an intention on the part of the Government when this war is ended to make these colonial forces a part of the regular military organisation of the Empire, to help in home defence as well as in colonial defence.

MR. WYNDHAM was understood to dissent.

*MR. BUCHANAN: The hon. Gentleman shakes his head. All I wish to say is that we ought not to be asked now to commit ourselves to any final decision as to what is to be done with this aid which the Colonial Governments have so spontaneously and generously offered. We ought not to be expected to commit ourselves to any organised or unorganised scheme of Imperial defence, which rests upon the aid of the self-governing colonies. All these schemes of military consolidation between the colonies and the mother country, if the Government intend to go to that length, are, I think, a mistake. The stability of our colonial empire rests upon our self-governing colonies being left free and independent as regards military administration and military control in the future as they have been in the past. If you endeavour to tighten the reins over them and to make demands upon them for military aid, they will expect, in the first place, a *quid pro quo*, and, in the second place, they will be exceedingly jealous of anything which savours of Downing Street interference with the management of the military or any other part of their affairs. At the present time the House is not in a condition to express a settled and reasoned judgment on this subject. We all hope that we are now beginning to see the end of this war, and

that soon the troops will be coming home victorious from that campaign, and this is not a moment to embark upon schemes of permanent reorganisation. Whatever the hon. Gentleman opposite may say, the whole of this large increase of military expenditure depends upon the policy of Her Majesty's Government. He asked whether it was due to the recent policy of Imperial expansion. He might have answered the question from the Memorandum of the Secretary of State, for on page 2 of that document we are told that it is the growth of our Imperial responsibilities that renders necessary this increased expenditure, and therefore I agree with the Secretary of State rather than with the hon. Gentleman. I am bound to say, however, that the hon. Gentleman did not go so far as the Leader of the House. The Leader of the House is the only person who has maintained or is capable of maintaining the extraordinary paradox that expenditure in no degree depends upon policy. The Under Secretary of State for War gave us, however, a very amusing and interesting history of the acquisition of the various parts of the Empire in which we have forces established at present. That was taken from a table at the end of the Army Estimates, but there were one or two stations which the hon. Gentleman omitted to mention.

MR. WYNDHAM : I did not omit any British infantry battalions.

*MR. BUCHANAN : I daresay not, but I cannot distinguish from the particulars given here which are British regiments and which are native.

MR. WYNDHAM : At page 22 of the Estimates the hon. Member will find that information.

*MR. BUCHANAN : The hon. Gentleman confined himself to British infantry battalions, but he will be the first to allow that the expansion of the Empire may be carried through with other arms of our military forces than British infantry battalions. I observed in this appendix that, leaving out South Africa and Egypt altogether, you have an increase in money charge upon the various places mentioned by the hon. Gentleman of no less than £185,000 in the present year, and the charge has been a steadily growing charge for the last three years. But

there were two important places which the hon. Gentleman did not mention, namely, the West Coast of Africa and Wei-hai-wei. The Under Secretary for War acknowledged last year that though the expenditure on the latter place was then a small one, a vast amount of expenditure would be involved in the future, and we find that Wei-hai-wei is included in this table for the first time this year, but it is certainly not the last time it will appear. That is certainly one of the simple cases in which expansion of the Empire and increased Imperial responsibilities have directly led to increased military expenditure. The hon. Gentleman passed glibly by South Africa. In his limited view to-night South Africa included only Cape Colony, which was taken from the Dutch in the beginning of the century, and Natal, which was taken about fifty years ago. But when was it we got Bechuanaland, Rhodesia, and Northern Rhodesia beyond the Zambesi? When was it we annexed British Central Africa, British East Africa, Uganda? We have been annexing, in the past ten years, millions of square miles in Eastern, Central, and Southern Africa. As to the West Coast of Africa, we find actually entered in this table the number of troops there, and the increasing charge coming year after year on the Estimates in consequence of the expansion of territory there and the increase of our obligations. It will be remembered, too, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget statements of 1897 and 1898, I think, when deploring the increase of expenditure, mentioned as one of the causes of that increased expenditure our expansions in Africa, the annual cost of which he reckoned at £1,000,000 a year. It is beyond all question that this large increase of our military expenditure is distinctly due to the recent expansions of the Empire, and the hon. Gentleman cannot shift from the shoulders of his Government the responsibility which lies upon them for the expansions which have been undertaken under their auspices during the past five years. I have ventured to call the attention of the House to these particular matters, because the full liabilities to be imposed upon the country have not been properly and fully stated, and I also desire to protest against the House being committed by the discussion to-night to an approval of a scheme for the perma-

nent reorganisation of our military system, and increase of our military expenditure.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): While I venture to congratulate the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for War upon his return to the House, I am bound to say that I thought his remarks more eloquent than convincing. I concur with every word spoken by the right hon. Baronet opposite, whom I consider to be an expert in all matters connected with military organisation, and I wish to support his remarks in reference to the speech made by the Leader of the House at Manchester three months ago. The right hon. Gentleman then said that three army corps had been sent to South Africa. There is not a single military expert who does not know perfectly well that three army corps were not sent. What was sent was a heterogeneous collection of regiments, pitch-forked together, without the necessary complement of guns, staff, or transport. I also concur in the remarks of the right hon. Baronet in reference to the statement of the Leader of the House that the military critics here boasted that they did not believe in an Army Reserve. It is not we who do not believe in an Army Reserve, but the right hon. Gentleman's own nominee, Lord Wolsley, a most distinguished soldier, who said in his examination before the Royal Commission that the Reserve was somewhat of a sham and that the people liked to have it so. The speeches of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for War, in connection with home defence, seem to show a considerable amount of intellectual detachment. I also think it rather suspicious when there is a general agreement between the right hon. Gentlemen on the two front benches; such a state of things is not in the interests of either the Navy or the Army. The remarks of the hon. Gentleman were of the old character; that is to say, "Take a million of money, put it in the slot, and take out 20,000 men." The hon. Gentleman said a month ago that we had 109,000 Regulars at home, while the Secretary of State for War went one better in another place, and said we had 110,000. He also stated that the Volunteers were to be put on a better footing; that they were to have ranges and guns; that the Yeomanry were to be called out for a month's training; that the Militia would be encouraged and given transport and guns; that seven reserve battalions were to be called up; that four regiments of cavalry, twelve

battalions of infantry, and some batteries of artillery were to be raised. With regard to the raising of those new battalions and regiments, I remember that in Shakespeare's *Henry IV.*, Glendower says, "I can call spirits from the vasty deep," to which Hotspur replies, "Why, so can I: or so can any man: But will they come, when you do call for them?" I do not think the War Office have very much chance of getting the battalions of infantry or the batteries of artillery they propose to raise. As to 109,000 or 110,000 Regulars supposed to be at home, of what is that number composed? There were seventeen battalions of infantry, seven regiments of cavalry, and twenty-one batteries of artillery, making in the aggregate about 24,500 men. The rest of the 109,000 were recruits, Army Reserve men, Army Service Corps, Engineers, Royal Medical Corps, and servants and clerks. That is not a mobile army that you could send abroad. If those 109,000 were capable soldiers, it is not in barracks at Chelsea or Hounslow they should be, but under the Southern Cross. With regard to the Volunteers, it is a very good thing to increase the capitation grant, but there is hardly a man in this House who has shouldered a rifle in a Volunteer corps who does not know that it is a counsel of perfection to say you are going to put the Volunteers under canvas for a month or even fourteen days. You may get them for three or possibly six days, but there is not the slightest chance of getting them for fourteen. We all agree that it is a good thing that the War Office are going to give the Volunteers mobile guns, but what is the War Office idea of a mobile gun? A little while ago, when the present Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was Under Secretary of State for War, we were told that the Volunteers had mobile guns, while we know perfectly well that what they had then were 40-pounders, without any horses—about as mobile as the table there or the Clock Tower outside. As to the Yeomanry, anyone with any knowledge of the subject knows that it is absolutely impossible to get them out for a month's training, not because the Yeomen would not be anxious to do a bit of soldiering, but because perhaps one-third of them are not mounted on their own horses. With regard to the four new cavalry regiments, I understand the idea was to take the reserve squadrons, turn them into service squadrons, and

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out of them compose cavalry regiments. The War Office can do a good deal. I know that in my own regiment when they wanted to send it to India, as it was not usual to send heavy cavalry regiments to India then, the War Office conceived the brilliant idea of making it a light cavalry regiment by giving the men blue coats instead of red. I cannot, see, however, how they are going to change a reserve squadron into a service squadron by a mere stroke of the pen. The hon. Gentleman spoke the other day of a reserve squadron being 600 strong. I know of one at Hounslow 900 strong. But those reserve squadrons are composed almost entirely of recruits. This one at Hounslow has two cavalry officers who had had any soldiering and five other officers. How you are going to turn reserve squadrons which are subsidiary and auxiliary to the troops at the front into service squadrons, and make them regular regiments, I absolutely fail to understand. As to the Militia, it used to be the glory and pride of a Militia battalion in the old days that it could put 1,000 men into the line, but that is not the case now. Under these circumstances some hon. friends and myself prepared a Bill which would have given what we call the ballot system for the Militia. We did not introduce it because of a speech made by an eminent politician who said that the ballot for the Militia meant conscription, that conscription would bring consternation and misery to every home, and that the very idea of conscription was driving a number of young men to America. That was a very extraordinary statement. The Boers between the ages of fourteen and sixty are enlisting to fight those whom they believe to be the enemies of their country, and yet we are told that men are running away from England rather than stand the chance of having to serve in the Militia at home. The hon. Gentleman referred to stores. That is a rather sore subject. The Secretary of State for War was "struck," as he calls it, the other day with the fact that stores were insufficient. That is rather an odd expression to use. I remember when hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House were struck with the insufficiency of stores, and when the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who was then Secretary of State for War, had apparently omitted to take note of the fact, with a result not very fortunate to the Government then in office. I should also like to refer to

the question of the number of battalions at home and the number abroad alluded to in the rescript of Lord Lansdowne. The noble Lord said that the number of battalions abroad was seventy-six and the number at home sixty-nine. They have proposed to equalise them, and they have proposed it in this way: they take three battalions which have not been raised and which have no practical existence, and add them to the number of battalions at home. The hon. Member then proposed to take a battalion at Gibraltar and said it was on the home strength, although it is hundreds of miles from London, and this battalion, as we should say in this House, would count twice upon a division. Then he says that your battalions abroad are all right and that they are only two battalions below the strength of the battalions at home. I do not think I ever heard such an argument, for it is like trying to justify the following calculation: the hon. Member would count the Members of this House at 670; you then multiply the clerks' table twice over, take two-thirds, count the Chairman twice over and deduct him; there you have the proportions and there you are. I think that calculation is quite as good as that of the War Office. I am afraid I have trespassed upon the time of the House; but this is a subject in which I take considerable interest, and that is my excuse for having done so.

Mr. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I should like to express my concurrence in the views of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean in almost all the points he put forward. There is one thing which has not been mentioned, however, and that is that the foremost thing about the Army that wants reforming is the War Office. Perhaps the most serious part of their behaviour is the answers they put into the hands of hon. Gentlemen and right hon. Gentlemen who have to give answers in this House. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for War gave an answer the other day to a question saying that the troops were waiting for the transports. He said they were all ready and would go as soon as the transports were available. From another question answered by the First Lord of the Admiralty it turned out that the Admiralty did not get the application for the transports till the Wednesday after this answer had been

given.* That is one of the cases in which the War Office has sent out an answer which is misleading. I do not say it is absolutely incorrect, but everyone in this House and out of it generally understood by the answer that the transports had been commissioned.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, they had, one week before.

MR. WARNER: And practically the only thing that was wanted were the transports.

MR. WYNDHAM: They may have been unable to supply them, but the men were ready.

MR. WARNER: Then I will withdraw my expression "misleading," and say these ambiguous answers are leading people to think something which is not the case and which has not happened. That is not the only case, for there are lots of other answers which lead people to think that something has happened which has not happened, and it is very annoying to find out that they have got some answer which means something ambiguous. There is another point which is rather important, and this question emphasises it. All through this great stress there has been a want of cohesion between the War Office and the Admiralty. It is a very small matter, but it has shown that they do not work completely in unison. People are very fond of going to see their friends off to the war, and ladies, and the wives and sisters and relatives of the soldiers especially, were anxious to do so. They applied for orders to see them off on the ship. The War Office telegraphs that the orders will be all right, and the embarking officer receives instructions to pass them. But the Admiralty interferes because the ship is part of their business, and the Admiralty issue orders that ladies and those who come to see the soldiers off cannot go on board. That shows the want of cohesion between the two Departments. I do not wish to detain the House, but there are a great many more points of the same sort that one could give. For instance, it is clear that there has been some friction between the War Office and the Admiralty with regard to contracts for the feeding of the troops on the transports.

* See Questions relating to the transport of the Eighth Division, *The Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. lxxix., February 27, page 1205; March 1, page 1413; March 2, page 1519.

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MR. WYNDHAM: No.

MR. WARNER: The hon. Gentleman says there was no friction, but probably there was a certain amount of correspondence. There was some correspondence as to the transports to be used, and as to the way they were to be used. One day the War Office applied for a transport to carry munitions, and then they would say the munitions were not wanted on that ship. On another occasion they would ask for a ship to carry so many horses, and then a week or so after they would say it was not so many men but more horses. These things were continually going on. I know they are not the fault of the Under Secretary for War in his capacity as the representative of the Government, but they are the inherent faults of the War Office system, which I am very sorry to say there has been no attempt to remedy at all, except in the one case of appointing another officer to superintend the embarkation of the Reserve forces. I should like to say a word on the question of the cavalry, which has been raised by the hon. and gallant Member for South-east Essex. The proposal may be a real increase for all we know, but there is a very curious position. A squadron is to be added to each of the Household Cavalry regiments, and that turns out to be a squadron of men without officers. There are no officers to be added, but it is merely an increase of the squadrons that already exist by so many men. I hope that the four regiments to be added are not to be all regiments without officers. There are one or two things about the Militia which I should like to have pressed. The first thing is that the bounty, which is to be increased and consolidated, ought to be published as soon as possible, because you will not get the recruits until you publish what increase you are going to make. I asked for it some time ago, and I hope this matter will not be delayed any longer. It is a very important question, and the sooner you state what the bounty is the better. Just now is the time of the year to get the recruits, for later on they will be much scarcer when there is plenty of work in the country. I should like the Under Secretary for War to state what the bounty is for this extra six months training. There is another bounty besides the usual one that is to be a permanent consolidation. He mentioned one thing I should like to understand better. Ho

said that the Militia was to be increased, and that the battalions were to be raised so as to equalise the Regular battalions. Are the existing battalions to be brought up to the full battalion strength, or only those companies in the Militia battalions? That is a point which makes some difference. Last year two or three were reduced to six company battalions, and are they to be raised again to the same strength as the Regular and ordinary battalions would be? I hope something will be done in the case of the Militiaman who is an old soldier, and who is forbidden, in consequence of having served his country in the Militia, from taking this £22. I suppose he is not going to be debarred, because he has served his country in the Militia, altogether from having some reward which any other old soldier who has not served his country in the past few years will receive for serving for one year. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean upon the plea he has made against this Royal Reserve being tied up at home. I do not think there should be any difficulty about it as to the year's service being added, and I think it is a great pity that that should have been put into their conditions of service. With regard to the rifle ranges I understand that most of them are not in this Vote at all, but that they come under the Works Vote, and are not in the Army Estimates at all.

MR. WYNDHAM: They are under the Military Works Act.

MR. WARNER: What is in this Estimate is an extra £100,000 to assist Volunteer regiments to get rifle ranges. I only wish to make it quite clear that this £100,000 does not in any way represent what is to be spent on ranges this year. Everybody has realised now that ranges are one of the most important things we could possibly spend the money upon, and I hope the War Office is by this time fully alive to the necessity of having a great many more ranges than at the present moment. The War Office takes a long time after it has realised anything to put it into execution, but I hope that the pressure which the country is putting upon them in regard to new ranges will make the War Office fully alive to the necessities of the case. I hope everything will be done not only to raise more artillery, but also to increase the efficiency of our batteries, and everything

that is possible should be done to bring them up to the proper standard.

*SIR HENRY FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes): I propose to limit my observations solely to the Volunteer scheme put forward by my hon. friend. As one of the senior officers in the Volunteer force who has served in that force from its very earliest commencement, I may say that I heartily agree with the scheme which has been put forward to meet the present emergency. We have for a very long time hardly been recognised as a force. We have had our ups and downs, but now I think it is a happy moment for all of us who have endeavoured to make this force to find that we are now recognised as an important portion of the forces that are to be used for the defence of this country. Many hon. Members may think, and others outside this House may also think, that calling upon the Volunteers to serve in this emergency this year for twenty-eight days in camp will be a hardship upon them. As one who has had a great deal to do with the Volunteer forces, may I say that I believe the Volunteers will cheerfully accept the proposition laid down by the War Office, and will do everything in their power to carry it out. We must recollect that when the Militia is embodied and when the defence of the country is considered of paramount importance, the Government and the War Office can call upon us compulsorily to take our share in the defence of the country. But they have met us on this occasion and in this emergency in a different way. They have asked us to come forward voluntarily, and they have proposed what are, in my opinion, most liberal terms to the force for this emergency. I hope that all commanding officers will take the word from me and say that it shall be done. There is, however, one point I do not quite grasp in my hon. friend's scheme, and that is whether camps will be found for the Volunteers by the Government free of expense to commanding officers; and whether another important item, that of water, will also be found free, or whether we shall have to find that ourselves. I think there was another matter which probably may not come under the head of allowances. The hon. Gentleman told us that the Volunteers, when in camp, would receive, in all ranks, the daily pay of Regular soldiers. Does that

mean as well the ordinary soldiers' allowances, and would the War Office allow free ration to be given to the Volunteer forces when in camp? I also wish to know whether the separation allowances granted to Regular soldiers in camp will also be afforded to the Volunteers while in camp. When my hon friend has an opportunity of replying I think it will be a gratification to all connected with the force if these two or three points could be cleared up. I hope that this year camp instruction will be devoted mainly to the practice of musketry, because that is no doubt the most important portion of the Volunteers' drill at this time. We have endeavoured to make ourselves more efficient in musketry, and if this year when these camps are formed—and are formed in the vicinity of ranges, which I hope they will be—with an officer appointed from one of the musketry staffs to carry out instruction in musketry it will be of the greatest value to commanding officers and to those taking part in the camp. Although I have had my battalion and brigade in camp for the past twenty-six consecutive years, it has been impossible, owing to the short period we have been in camp, to carry out the musketry drill which is required for the efficiency of the Volunteers, and that is a question of the greatest importance. If the War Office can make arrangements for carrying out this instruction in musketry I am sure it will be a benefit to all. I beg to differ from one remark made by my hon. and gallant friend the Member for South East Essex. He has told us that he has been in almost every portion of Her Majesty's forces except the Volunteers, and he doubts very much whether the Volunteers could be found who would come out into camp for a period longer than three or six days. I beg to differ from that opinion, for my experience in camp with the Volunteers is far greater than his, and I feel satisfied that this year all of them will put their shoulders to the wheel and will accept the orders of the War Office with regard to this lengthened period in camp, and I feel sure the War Office will not regret having asked them to do it. We have been told that the employers of labour will find great difficulty in allowing their men to go away, but I believe that employers of labour are patriotic, and they will come to the rescue of the Volunteer force and allow

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their men to go into camp for as long a period as possible. One thing I think is of great importance, and it is this: that it will possibly be the means, by lengthening the period of camping out, of eliminating from the force a great many of the men who never come to camp, and who hardly do any drills except just sufficient to make themselves efficient for shooting purposes. Those men possibly this year may go, and I can say, as one who knows the force well, that we shall not regret their absence. I think that the proposals of the Government are most satisfactory with regard to the Volunteers. We will all do what we can, and I am sure the Volunteers will do their best to prove themselves to be a real force with nothing sham about them.

*MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I should like to make a few remarks upon the subject of the memorandum, in the hope that the hon. Gentleman will answer fully several deductions which I think can be drawn from them. On page 3 I notice seven battalions of horse artillery and thirty-six batteries of field artillery are about to be raised. Then there comes the extraordinary statement that in time of peace the new horse and field artillery batteries will be retained on the reduced establishment. I would like to ask the Under Secretary to compare that with his statement in the following paragraph, namely, that the growth of our Imperial responsibilities, and in particular the course of events in South Africa, renders it necessary to increase this force. Nothing was said about putting the infantry on a reduced establishment, and here the very first time that the Government come to Parliament to put their artillery on a proper footing they tell you on the same page that they are about to reduce those batteries to the same skeleton form in which they were before. I say if they approach this question logically, more particularly on the subject of artillery, and say that as soon as this war is over we will reduce these batteries to a skeleton form, if that is the intention they might just as well save themselves the trouble of forming these new batteries. You cannot make an artillery soldier in one year, and in my opinion you cannot make a cavalry or an artillery soldier under three years, but you may make an infantry soldier in one year. What are the War Office going to do? They are going to keep the infantry force at the strength which they think is necessary, and the moment

the war is over they say they are going to reduce their batteries to the old skeleton form. The same old story will happen again: you have found yourselves very short of artillery. I heard the hon. and gallant Member for Newington ask a question about the guns at present supplied to the artillery with our forces in South Africa.* I have personal knowledge of many of the guns supplied to the field and horse artillery, and you have no reserve of guns at the present moment to replace those guns which may be put out of action. In this Estimate you say nothing about creating a reserve of guns. It is the absence of such a reserve that you are suffering from now, and which has been the cause of your reverses in South Africa. And yet you are still coming up with the old War Office story which has led our Army into all its trials and troubles. If you are going to root out the evil you will have to clear out the War Office from the top to the bottom, and until you do that you will never have an effective Army, and certainly you will never have an effective artillery. I think I have made it plain to the House that there is practically no idea of forming a reserve of guns. The only thing we are told is that as soon as the war is finished the artillery will be put upon the reduced establishment. There are no finer men in the world than our artillery officers, and they have not had fair play nor a proper chance to show their abilities. There is another matter which I think has not been properly treated, and that is the question of the War Office itself. There is no mention made at all here of any inquiry into the War Office or of any alterations in it. I am perfectly certain of this, that every member of Her Majesty's service and every Member of this House who has been in Her Majesty's service will allow that absolutely the whole of the failures that we have had in the present war are owing to the present system adopted by the War Office. It amuses me day by day to hear gentlemen who are very amiable and excellent civilians speaking to hon. Members, who bring before them what are absolutely just criticisms, and they instantly get a War Office clerk's answer, and with this the country will never be satisfied. We have seventy-five Members of this House who have been in Her Majesty's Army, and I ask them to band themselves together and

assist in forcing the hands of Her Majesty's Government as regards this question. I ask them to have this Augean stable, the War Office, cleansed from the top attic to the bottom cellar. Then, and then alone, the economies of the War Department can be carried out. There is another question which I think this House will not be satisfied with, and that is the question of promotion and selection and secret reports. I am in a position to tell Members of this House that a secret report made a very short time ago—for such reports do get out sometimes—would have absolutely got rid of the officer who is now commanding the cavalry brigade in South Africa—I mean General French. Another such report was made against two of the ablest officers we have at present in South Africa. General French would not be the hero he is to-day if General Luck's secret report regarding him had been acted on. All these matters should be adjudicated on by a board of officers serving as a committee of the War Office. As long as the Army is governed by cliques at the War Office, so long will it be inefficient and unsatisfactory. Sir Redvers Buller was recommended by the War Office, as were also General Gatacre and Lord Methuen, but when these were superseded by the Council of Defence, Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener were sent out. The system of cliqueism which has reigned at the War Office for so many years has been the curse of our Army, and will be as long as it is allowed to continue. Therefore, I ask old officers who are Members of this House not to be afraid of the consequences of free speech. Our hearts should be in the work of endeavouring to redress the grievances of the Army, and to put it into a proper and efficient condition. We should see that an adequate service of guns should be given to the Army, and that men's lives should not be sacrificed in an unnecessary manner, and further that good men should not be turned out of the Army by secret reports. That I strongly object to, and as long as I have the honour of being a Member of the House of Commons I will continue to urge hon. Members who have been in the Army to see that the War Office is not dominated by cliques. The recommendations of old officers are sneered at by hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury bench. Only the other night the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Yarmouth was

* See page 26 of this Volume.

sat upon for bringing forward what he knew was in the interests of the force in which he is interested. We are answered with sneers and jeers. We are told we know nothing and that the Army must be ruled by War Office clerks who form a mutual adulation society. Take the secret report on General French, the man who to-day is lauded by every old cavalry officer like myself. It is to gross abuses such as that that I would direct the attention of hon. and gallant Members. I look to them with confidence, for I believe that, on whichever side of the House they may sit, they are not afraid of War Office cliques. I ask them to stand shoulder to shoulder and to insist that soldiers shall be ruled by soldiers, and that soldiers must be first among those who advise Her Majesty's Councillors as to what is best for the Army.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (Dr. TANNER, Cork County, Mid). House counted, and forty Members being found present.

*MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): We have all listened to the speech of the Under Secretary for War with attention and with admiration, and although it has introduced sweeping changes in the character of reform and improvement in the War Office, I feel sure that it will tend to better the service and to render it both efficient and capable of performing the duties which will be put upon it in the future. My object in rising is to endorse the sentiment that the Under Secretary for War has uttered, inasmuch that conscription would be distasteful and impossible in this country. But in order to make this contingency as remote as possible, it would be well if the War Office considered the possibility of introducing company and squad drill in our elementary schools. I think that a capitation grant might be given to cadet corps, that they might wear some uniform, and that the ranges might be put at their service for practice on certain days: and it might be considered by the War Office whether all schools which obtain aid from the Government should not be able to produce every year a certain number of efficiently drilled boys—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The line of argument pursued by the hon. Member is rather relevant to the Education Vote than to a discussion on the Army Estimates.

Major Jameson

*MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR: I only wanted to refer to the subject cursorily, but of course, Mr. Speaker, after your ruling I will not pursue it further except to say that it is absolutely necessary in order to make the Volunteer force at all efficient that boys at school should be taught to obey the word of command in numbers. In regard to the capitation grant that is to be given to the Volunteers, nothing has been said to encourage Volunteers in our colonies. We all know how patriotic the colonies have been, and what they have done for us at a critical time, but I see nothing in these Estimates which would encourage the Volunteers in our colonies to do for us again what they have done for this country. I am confident that if the same proportion of funds was allotted to the Volunteers in our colonies as at home, a large force might be embodied for the defence of these colonies without any call on the mother country. Now, Sir, there is another point which I think might commend itself also to the War Office, and that is for them to encourage rifle clubs. It is to be deplored that in this country, where sportsmen abound, the rifle is not more practised with, and that men generally shoot with a sporting gun at game; that all interest is lost when it comes to proficiency in shooting with such a much more useful and more important weapon as our rifle. I think that on certain days the ranges—for which we are voting so much money—might be put at the disposal of these rifle clubs, and that ammunition might either be supplied at cost price or given free, and that old guns might be given out to those who, in these clubs, would make use of them for the purpose of becoming efficient shots. I note with interest that a fortnight only in camp is to be demanded from our Volunteers in order to meet the requirements of efficiency. I cannot help asking again that this fortnight should be divided into two parts to meet the convenience of both men and of employers of labour; that efficiency might be granted to men who could and would serve for a week at a time at different periods. I certainly think that we ought not unnecessarily to impose difficulties and restrictions on the patriotism of our Auxiliary forces, and we should not exact more contribution from them in the way of giving time and service than we can possibly help. At the same time, I am

confident that the Volunteers in my division—several of whom are at the present moment fighting at the front—would give any time that might be asked from them in order to make themselves efficient, and to be able to defend their country. Sir, there is no panic, because the country knows that the War Office has completely vindicated itself as an efficient machine, and the country knows that we have able administrators to direct and to supply the magnificent army we have sent to the front; and I am confident that, having regard to the generals, to the heroism of the men whom they lead, success must eventually crown the efforts which are now being made by all who have anything to do with this great and what I may consider just war.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): I do not think that the Volunteer Mounted Infantry have received the encouragement as to the increase in numbers and efficiency which the corps deserve. No grant is given to the mounted infantry companies other than that to the ordinary Volunteers, and they are left to face all the extra expenditure as best they can. They have large expenses at the annual camp and in upkeep, equal to £7 or £8 per man, while the mere cost of carriage of horses to camp averages £1. I think an annual grant should be given to the mounted infantry for equipment, clothing, repayment of railway fares, and for stabling and forage during camp. I shall be very glad if the Under Secretary of State for War could inform me and others deeply interested in the subject that the mounted infantry are going to receive that consideration which is their due.

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince): I congratulate the War Office upon the large number of troops they have sent out to South Africa, which, I believe, is double the number which expected to be sent out under Lord Cardwell's scheme. I am one of those who always supported Mr. Cardwell's principle as a true principle; but, at the same time, one grievous defect in it has been shown during this war. I mean that it is a terrible inconvenience to have to declare that there is a great national emergency before calling out the Reserves. It must be recollected that, having a Volunteer army, we have to enlist boys, and when a regiment is sent to the front we have to fill the ranks with Reservists. I

firmly believe that had an army corps with its transport complete, been collected in the summer, so as to be available at any moment, complete in every respect, a great deal of loss both in blood and treasure would have been saved. For many weeks our soldiers were sent out to South Africa in fractions, and we had to collect mules all over the world; and then these mules had to be broken in. The result was that our advance was tied to the railway line. I hold that our ordinary field guns should be made so mobile that they could be marched with either mounted infantry or cavalry, and that some guns of position should be made mobile. I entirely approve of what the War Office has done in regard to compulsory service. This is not the time for compulsory service; but if ever we were to be involved in a war with a great Power, which I humbly trust will never be the case, we should require to have recourse to compulsory service, just as the Americans had at the end of their war. But the Americans incurred a debt of one thousand million pounds sterling—we must not incur such a debt. I think manœuvres in different districts throughout the country are absolutely necessary in order to teach officers and men the best methods of reconnoitring.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I wish to offer a few remarks of a general character before we proceed to the discussion of the details of the Estimates. I cannot help agreeing practically with the hon. Member for East Aberdeen, that the yearly Estimates are presented in a form which prevents us obtaining a full sense of the responsibilities, even with the small extra addition to our Army organisation, we are incurring this year. Inevitably the continued refusal of this, as of all former Governments, to adopt any form of compulsory service, drives us into the other alternative of facing a very large additional expenditure. I cannot help thinking, however, that it would have been singularly inappropriate and untimely if the Government had at this date—in the face of so much enthusiasm and the readiness evinced by all classes in the United Kingdom to serve the country—chosen to introduce any form of compulsion. The present time would have been most inappropriate for anything more than the scheme of invitation which the War Office has put forward. Every suggestion made to-night, as on many former

occasions, involves some increase in expenditure. No voice has been raised in the direction of retrenchment and economy, or even a greater vigilance over the expenditure entrusted to the Army. It is very difficult to attempt anything of that kind, because under the Army Estimates we deal with only a part of the forces of the Crown. The Foreign Office has considerable forces which are available for operations outside the territories where they are permanently stationed. The same is true of the Colonial Office, and until we have a full view of the whole forces in the different parts of the possessions of the Queen, it is impossible to look at this question comprehensively. While it is true that our growing Imperial responsibilities force upon us additional expenditure, it is very difficult to separate altogether the duties of the Army and Navy when we come to consider the larger question of defence. Inevitably we must face a very large increase in capital expenditure on the part of the Army for barrack accommodation, married men's quarters, rifle ranges, etc. It has been pointed out to us by the Under Secretary for War, and the Secretary for War in the other House, that we are taking considerable steps to increase our military forces. It is very natural that any Government should take advantage of the existing military ardour of the nation to achieve measures for which, in more peaceful times, it would be difficult to obtain permission. I think the changes proposed in the present scheme of Army organisation have not been sufficiently emphasised. Our Army organisation was last radically changed in 1887, and since then our demands for military defence and Army organisation have very much grown. In the memorandum attached to the Army Estimates in 1887 it is stated that—

"The preparations for mobilisation made by Mr. Childers (in 1881) only extended to providing one army corps, which it was intended to be ready to take the field at any time in any of the small wars in which we are so often engaged. It was to consist entirely of Regulars, and to furnish it, and at the same time meet considerations of expense, the establishments of our battalions were carefully graduated, so that those first for foreign service stood at the highest strength. Twelve of these, together with six battalions from the Mediterranean and three battalions of Guards, were to form the infantry of the army corps, which it was considered we should be able to put into the field at any moment."

Capt. Sinclair.

Then, after referring to subsequent changes and additions to the scheme, the memorandum went on to say—

"Subject to these changes and additions, our present forces might be so arranged that they would be sufficient to provide men for all our home and colonial garrisons, and also to furnish two army corps of Regular troops, each stronger by four battalions than those contemplated in 1875, together with a strong cavalry division, and the necessary troops to guard their line of communication. After doing this there would still remain a balance of disciplined troops, which would form a nucleus round which a further army might be collected."

In the following year in a most interesting memorandum we find the Secretary for War carried the scheme a little further. We have gone on twelve years since that time, and although nominally our objects and aims are not very different from what they were then, we seem every year to be committed to a larger and larger expenditure. The naval defence expenditure of the country has grown up in the last fifteen years from 13½ millions to 30 millions, and the total defence expenditure has mounted from 27 to nearly 54 millions. The point I want to urge is, if we are going to complete our arrangements and avoid any risk whatever, if we are to have everything perfect—mobilisation depôts, in which to maintain complete stores of ammunition, clothing, saddlery, and so forth, for every possible eventuality, then we have got to face a very much greater increased expenditure than at the present time. In my opinion we have gone as far as we need go in regard to Naval expenditure, I mean so far as the safety of the country requires. What has happened in the Navy leads me to fear that the same will continue in the Army. We are going to provide for a large and permanent increase in our Army expenditure which may lead us to impose an unnecessary burden on the country. There is no difference of opinion in any quarter of the House as to the necessity not only of carrying this war to a successful conclusion, but of taking every necessary step to put our home defence into a proper and effective condition; but I am apprehensive that we are going a little too far, and it is the duty of those who think as I do to draw attention to these facts. When we hear of the number of mounted infantry we cannot help reflecting that our Army may be called upon for other service, and that in the continental armies cavalry has been increased, which shows

that under certain conditions cavalry has not altogether gone out of use. We have three climates in which our men may be called upon to serve, and that shows into what a bottomless pit of expenditure we may fall if we are to have stores, clothing, equipment, saddlery, etc., suitable for all climates, and have our depôts complete. That is a fair illustration of the obligations we are undertaking, subject to the wider obligation of being ready for every eventuality. Nobody can do otherwise than agree with what the Under Secretary said as to the loyal feelings and military strength throughout the Empire, but, at the same time, there is another side, and if one reflects on the main argument of this South African war, an argument which appeals to a great number of people is that this assumption of great military power may lead to the development of sentiments from which as an insular Power we have hitherto been free. We must remember that, while we have been protected from the responsibilities of continental nations who have long frontiers to guard, that freedom has safeguarded us from entering into competition with them as a military Power, and we have never interfered in dynastic disputes with Continental Powers. Our pursuits hitherto have been industrial and peaceful pursuits, free from the burden of large military expenditure. With regard to our colonies, they are not rich communities, and there was considerable difficulty at the time of the Cardwell scheme in getting them to undertake the obligation of their own self-defence, and it appears to me we are rather attempting to impose a military policy upon our colonies. It is very desirable that no action of ours, or display of our power, should provoke such actions in others, and thus put an end to the industrial evolution which is going on. It may have been inevitable, but it is none the less true, that our naval expenditure has been followed by increased naval expenditure by other Powers, and if we increase the Army expenditure, and provoke others to take similar measures, we incur a very great responsibility. We have to-night heard of a new departure in the Indian Army, namely, the raising of two Indian regiments for service, not in India but elsewhere. It is perfectly true that we have an inexhaustible supply to draw upon in a large and warlike population, but the raising of those regiments is a thing which will be

noted by other Powers and may be followed. As to the colonial contingents, it is no doubt perfectly right that we should take advantage of and reward the desire of the colonies to take part in the defence of the Empire, but if we impose on the colonies the responsibility of taking sides in our party struggles at home we shall interfere with their free and unfettered development, and that is a danger which, in my opinion, should be carefully avoided. It is a legitimate question for discussion in this House whether we should not do that cautiously and gradually, and not at once plunge into large expenditure. I do not yield to any Gentleman in this House as to the responsibility of this country, not only in regard to our colonial subjects but also to the native races, in whatever part of the world they may be, but we would do well to carefully scrutinise all those increases of expenditure. We shall also do well to go carefully into any of these colonial defence questions, and we are well within our right in this House when we venture on various occasions to criticise the proposals the Government lay before us.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: I think it fortunate for the War Office that they have such a representative in the House just now, of the ability and persuasive eloquence as the Under Secretary. His manner is so delightful that one is inclined to overlook unpleasant facts. His policy is a policy of allurements, and he leads us away from the War Office nest so that we should not too closely examine what is in it. I do not think, however, that the House or the country has given sufficient credit to the War Office with regard to the supply of food and stores, and the arrangements for the proper care of the sick and wounded. I venture to say that if anybody had told us at this time last year that we should have to supply food and attend to the wants of 200,000 men 6,000 miles away, and do it without a hitch, we should not have believed it. I think it is only right that some one should call attention to that aspect of the question. Those officials of the War Office are not much heard of, and their photographs are not seen in the shop windows, but an occasion like this should be seized to let them know that the House of Commons at least recognises their worth. I am not going to be

controversial, but I cannot help making one or two general observations. I cannot understand why it is that because we have a war 6,000 miles away, it is necessary to provide for emergencies apart from that war. I cannot understand the policy of the War Office in submitting a new and enlarged permanent programme in connection with the services. In 1897 when I submitted a motion with reference to the Army it was contemplated we should have to send a larger force across the sea. We have sent, I suppose, 100,000 men. Then why propose a new policy and a new arrangement for home defence now, when in 1897 the conditions were considered by the War Office good enough, and sufficient even if we had to send 167,000 regulars over the sea? What had happened to make it so imperative now to add to the numbers provided for home defence? I am not saying anything in regard to the efficiency of the forces you already have. So far as the Volunteers and the Militia go, I am extremely glad the Government are taking the opportunity of improving these services. My objection is in regard to the increase in the numbers available for home defence. I wish to know why it is that the War Office propose to spend more money on mere numbers for the special purpose of increasing the means of military local defence. One thing that has happened since 1897 is that you have increased your Fleet. There is another thing that has happened, and that is that you have had experience of the enormous difficulty of sending any great military force over sea. You are at peace on the sea, and everybody is extremely proud that you have been able to send 85,000 men out of this country and convey them safely to South Africa.

MR. WYNDHAM: These are not my figures. There are 107,000 Regulars now. That leaves out of account the Militia.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: I hope I shall be clear about this. I think it is extremely important to be absolutely clear in our minds as to the influence of our sea power on military arrangements. If I take the figure at 107,000 I must extend the time from October to March. I ask if anyone in his senses, knowing our unrivalled mercantile marine, ports and wharfrage, would get up and say that our sending of 100,000 men with stores, horses,

Sir John Colomb.

and all complete over sea from this country in six months was not satisfactory work, though recollect you have been drawing supplies and animals from every part of the world. You could not attempt to send these transports unless you were masters of the sea. Do you expect other nations, without any experience in the embarkation and flotation of large bodies of troops, to do it in one, two, or six weeks? Although you have not lost confidence in the Fleet, you do not think the naval power is sufficient to prevent great expeditions crossing the sea. What does that mean to the colonies? You are at this moment on the one hand asking money for an increase of military local protection at home against over sea military expeditions, and you are at the same time asking men to be sent from colonies to South Africa in the belief that your naval power is sufficient to protect them from attack. It is a position I altogether protest against. If your sea power is not equal to the task of paralysing any attempt at a great military expedition over sea, then I say your sea power is not able to guarantee colonies against attack abroad. You cannot expect, and you must not expect, ever by voluntary efforts any arrangements under such conditions for consolidating the military power of the Empire. You cannot expect it except on the basis of absolute sea security, and if you have got absolute sea security what becomes of your spending money in building up a force against military invasion? As far as I understand, the policy of the Government is really to ignore the influence of sea power in our military arrangements. I say it is piling up local military expenditure which cannot easily be pulled down again for political reasons. You never can reduce it. I feel that above all you must provide at any cost for the safety of your Empire, but I protest against spending a penny wrongly, and I protest against taking advantage of a war fever to pile up the permanent expenses for local military defence of the country. By and by a reaction must come. There will be bad times and bad trade, and there will be nothing of that warlike spirit which prevails just now. Let the efficiency of the existing local forces be increased to the utmost. I am speaking against the increasing of numbers, and exaggerating the proportions of any possible sea attack. I agree with the Under

Secretary that the expansion of our military force was due to the expansion of the Empire, but I think for his purpose he was unfortunate in his illustrations, for not one of the places he mentioned can be secured by local defence alone. They are retained by sea power. St. Lucia, which was three times taken and lost, was an instance. Every place dependent upon the sea must be defended by the influence of the Navy, pile up fortifications and the Army as you like. I say distinctly that a military force may delay the capture, but it never can secure any place dependent on the sea by any means whatever. I protest very humbly against the principle upon which we go year after year, of building up a military policy while ignoring the influence of sea power, which rules, and must rule, your military policy.

*MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helens): I have listened with a very great deal of interest to what has been said by hon. Members, and especially to the speech of the Under Secretary this evening. I think the part of that speech which interested me most was that in which he cited historical precedents, going back I think to 1400, in favour of what was described as the Jingo policy of the present Government. I can only say that is a policy in which I am entirely in favour. But the particular part of the speech I wish to criticise is that in reference to rifle ranges, and included in that question is the question of rifle training of the military, the Militia, and the Volunteers. I admit that I have a considerable deal of diffidence in speaking on this subject. I am not, like my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Essex, with a great deal of military experience. I have served in the Inns of Court Rifle Volunteer Corps, but I cannot claim to have a very large military experience. I do think this question of military rifle ranges important, and it has been a great deal lost sight of by the military authorities and my hon. friend. What is the lesson of the war now going on in South Africa? The lesson we have had there is the lesson of the modern magazine rifle. I think by far the larger portion of the casualties have been caused by rifle fire. The issue of that war and of every other modern war will, so far as the arms are concerned, depend first on rifle fire and the proper use of the rifle, and, speaking as a civilian, it

seems to me that the military authorities are held down to a particular system of rifle training. In the days of the old "Brown Bess" it was not a matter of importance if you gave the soldiers a great deal of practice. I am a great believer in the British soldier whether he is English, Welsh, Scotch, or Irish, though, speaking as a Scotchman, I am perhaps prejudiced in favour of the Scotch. But I do believe that the shooting of the average British soldier is bad. I think the general average shooting of the British Army is bad, and not half so good as it ought to be. This question is of enormous importance at the present moment. We have a splendid weapon, and I believe the modern Lee-Netford rifle is as good as you can place in the hands of any soldier, but I think the military authorities have not realised the importance of training. I do not want to enlarge too much on this subject, but there is only one road, one known method by which you can produce a good body of really expert riflemen, and that method is constant and continuous rifle practice. I know something about rifle shooting. You can teach a man to ride comparatively easily. You can teach him the qualities of discipline and courage, and you can teach him drill comparatively easily, but if you want to make him a good rifle shot you must give him constant practice. Take the ordinary Tommy Atkins. I am told that the utmost amount of practice he gets is sixteen days in the year, and the ammunition he fires on these sixteen days out of the 365 days in the year is something like 250 rounds, including the company competitions, sighting shots and everything else. There are only sixteen days in the year on which he looks along the sight of a rifle, and with that amount of practice you cannot produce a good rifleman. The Boers are always shooting. On the west coast of America the men are always shooting, but they are not a bit better in nerve or physique than our own soldiers. The reason why they are better shots is that they are always practising, and that they are accustomed to handling the rifle almost every day in the year; therefore, the result is if you have half a regiment of these men in an African kopje I believe they would do as much execution and would be as difficult to approach and encounter as ten times the number of British soldiers, for the simple reason that

they are very much better marksmen with their rifles. I believe it costs £100 to send a soldier from here to the front. If that man is a bad shot I say he is not worth the money, and he is not worth sending out. These are some of the considerations I wish to offer to the House. We all know that the British soldier is not a good shot because he is not given sufficient facilities. They do not pay strict attention to the question of continuous rifle practice; and what has my hon. friend done? He has not gone into detail, but he has indicated one or two slight alterations. He is going to allow the Volunteers certain special allowances, and with regard to the question of musketry he is going to send an officer over to Switzerland to find out something about their system of rifle ranges. It is also proposed to devote £140,000 to acquiring more ranges. The hon. Gentleman has not told us, however, how he is going to spend it. I submit that in every one of those particulars the proposals of the War Office are inadequate, and the important principle which I have outlined to the House has not been observed. In none of these methods shall we be giving facilities for the continuous rifle practice which I submit is so absolutely necessary. I may be leading up to a somewhat extravagant suggestion, but granted that that is the only way to gain this continuous practice, I submit that it is absolutely necessary to spend a very much larger sum of money to provide rifle ranges all over the country. Take the case of the Volunteer or Militiaman who has to go and practise on the range. If he has to spend half a day in getting there and back he is taken a whole day away from his duty to have perhaps twenty or thirty shots. He looks upon it as a nuisance, and so does his commanding officer. He is a long way from his range, and sufficient money has not been found to provide these ranges. They are too far off, and the Volunteers cannot go close by to constantly practise. I submit that in order to meet the importance of this question my hon. friend ought to have allocated a very much larger sum of money to be spent in acquiring ranges all over the country. Instead of £140,000 in a War Vote of nearly £61,000,000, we ought to contemplate either £2,000,000, £3,000,000, or £4,000,000—I do not care to a million or two—in acquiring ranges close to every military

Mr. Seton-Karr.

centre, Volunteer headquarters, and camping grounds, so that our Volunteers should be made as good shots as any body of men in the world. If the country is not prepared to do something in this direction it will be because we do not sufficiently appreciate the full value of these modern weapons. It may be asked, how can such a scheme as that be carried out? I should like to indicate that compulsory powers might be granted in this House to the Imperial authority to obtain land for rifle ranges wherever it was required, and wherever it was possible to get it. I believe there are powers already, but they are not strong enough. I believe there are many cases in which a small landowner can interfere and prevent rifle ranges being provided. If we have the powers now, why are they not exercised? It has sometimes been suggested that local authorities should be given this power, and I believe that Nottingham, for example, has patriotically established a local rifle range. I do not, however, believe in the action of local authorities in matters of this kind, for I think it is far too large a thing to give to any local authorities, and it ought to be done by the Imperial authorities. Rifle ranges should be placed all over the country under direct military control. I believe the present military authorities would be quite prepared to do it, only they have not got the powers nor the money. This House should be prepared to open the purse-strings of the Imperial Exchequer in order to give the sum required. We talk of £140,000 upon a question of this kind, but that is a mere bagatelle if the subject is of sufficient importance. I submit that this is a national matter, and that the proposals of the hon. Gentleman are altogether inadequate. I have always listened with interest to his proposals, but in this one respect I say they are altogether inadequate, and I hope he will be able to convince me that I am wrong. I should like to hear him talk boldly of a large sum of money being spent on this question, for there is a strong feeling upon it in the country. Correspondence has taken place in the London daily papers on this subject, and anyone who has read it along with the leading articles in those papers will conclude that the people of this country are deeply impressed with the importance of the question of providing military rifle ranges, and of getting out of the old rut we have been in for so many years, when our rifles were such

inferior weapons. The public are deeply impressed with that, and I believe they will force the hand of the Government belong long, and compel them to spend money upon this subject. Many of my hon. friends have been dealing with military considerations of which I confess I have no knowledge. I am talking as a civilian, and I should like to see some of those military considerations subordinated to this question of rifle ranges. We want to raise our standard of rifle shooting, for the day may come when it is of enormous importance to possess a body of expert riflemen. The day may come when we want riflemen ready trained to repel an aggressive foe, and I do not believe we are doing justice to the material we have got under our present system. I do not believe we are doing our men justice unless we spend more money in giving them facilities to acquire an expert use of the weapon we have provided them with. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will give us some assurance that the scheme is going to be a little larger than that which has been indicated in his statement.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I am sure that almost everyone in the House will share the desire that has been so freely expressed by the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, that there should be better opportunities for rifle practice in this country, not only for the Army, but for the subsidiary branches of the national defence, and also even for civilians who wish to acquire the art of shooting. At the same time the hon. Gentleman, I think, somewhat exaggerated the prospect of hostilities that may come. To begin with, he threw about millions with a magnificence that we can all admire, but which would not be very convenient when the time came to find the millions. And the prospect for the country is not altogether pleasing. I remember a friend of mine, as patriotic as anyone in this House, a Member of this House, and an ardent supporter of the system of allotments, declared to me that if allotments went much further he would emigrate, because he would have lost sight of England—it would have been cut up into rather unsightly little patches of cultivable land. The hon. Member suggests another possibility—that we should hardly be able to get our heads out of the door or window without trespassing

on somebody's rifle range. Let us keep our patriotic zeal within bounds, and I think the hon. Gentleman will find that what he desires may be effected very much short of the adoption of all the schemes he has propounded. But on one point, and that is the main point, I entirely agree with him—that full power should be obtained, such as may be necessary for acquiring the ground for the purpose, if the legislative powers to that effect are at present insufficient. We are engaged practically on the second debate upon the same subject, and while I join most fully in the compliments which the hon. Gentleman deserves for the manner in which he introduced the subject to-night, I must say that, though in details he gave us a great deal of new matter, his statement was in substance necessarily a repetition of what he told us a few weeks ago, and this debate partakes of the same nature also; therefore I have no desire, for my part, to occupy the time of the House at any length. With regard to the war itself, it is a war, I think, we ought not to exaggerate, and at the same time let us not belittle it. I believe it has been a great achievement. It is an achievement such as this country never could have accomplished before, and such as no other country at the present moment could undertake. If faults and defects have been disclosed, if there have been mistakes here and omissions there, let us hope that they have not been on such a scale as to deserve any severe censure, and let us hope they will serve as lessons for us in the future, and that those who are responsible will find out means of avoiding them. With regard to the new proposals for the addition to the strength of the Army, I said on a previous occasion that, for my part, I accept them. The additions to the strength of the artillery and of the cavalry are undoubtedly desirable. That has not only been disclosed by our experience in this war, but it was known before. Let me candidly say, as I have often said, that I am not, and never have been, a devotee of the army corps system. We have got into the way in this country of talking about army corps—that we must have four army corps, or five army corps. An army corps, for purposes, may be a convenient limit up to which we can organise military forces. But an army corps borrowed from Continental

with a proper and full complement of the different arms which those nations find to be necessary for their kind of warfare, is very seldom the kind of force we require for our kind of warfare. Even in the present instance, what was the use of disputing whether the First Lord of the Treasury was right or not when he said there were three army corps in South Africa? As a matter of fact, no part of them moved or fought as an army corps. They were a large number of men in organised bodies. The moment it embarked or disembarked the army corps ceased to exist in that form, even if it had that form before it started. It is a totally different thing with continental nations, who have open country over which they can proceed in all directions and move and fight an army corps. That is very seldom the case with us, and if we were to use troops in that formation and organisation it would only be if we were to take part in a great European war and vie with our neighbours on the Continent—an enterprise from which, I should have thought, we had long since made up our minds to refrain. But I accept the additions that are being made, and I accept especially the additional battalions of infantry, because we must have a certain number of additional battalions of infantry, owing to the number of battalions which are in garrison abroad. The hon. Gentleman went over all the stations abroad, and he triumphantly pointed to the fact that they had been long in the occupation of this country. In fact, I am not sure that he did not claim that an American station was occupied by the English before the discovery of America. I will not go so far as that.

MR. WYNDHAM: Halifax. Though some people throw doubt upon it, I believe Bristol made the discovery of America.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If it is established, I am very glad to accept that. But the truth is, a single battalion that may be stationed in each of these colonies is sufficient for the ordinary garrison, for garrison purposes. It altogether depends on what your policy is in connection with these colonies; for each of these stations may be made the base for some ambitious enterprise. I will take the case of South Africa. Until quite recently there were only two battalions there. And why? Because

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the universal belief was that we had no need for any military force there at all except for the purpose, partly of representing the dignity of the Empire and partly to make sure the naval station at Simons Bay. As to their being required for internal purposes, that never entered into the mind of man; and that is a case from which one can see how a particular policy may make demands on the Army which are not contemplated by those who have regard to a peace garrison. The hon. Gentleman talked of the necessity for a great force being maintained in different parts of the Empire. I yield to no one in my desire to secure the defence of the Empire in every part, but at the same time let me make this criticism on what he said. With great eloquence the hon. Gentleman said that the Navy was, as it were, the girders that bind the Empire together, and that the coaling stations were the resting places for the ends of those girders. I venture to think that that illustration is rather significant of what I am afraid may be a misunderstanding of the true state of the case. It is not the Navy routes we have to look to. It is the trade routes; the constant commercial intercommunication and the good feeling developed by commercial intercourse. That is what produces the strength and the binding force of the Empire, for the protection of which we require the Navy. But do not let us get into the way of thinking that the Empire exists for the Navy or the Army. Let us remember that the great strength both of this country itself and of the Empire at large consists in its being an Empire of peace and commerce, and good relations and good feeling between communities which are independent, so far as their own affairs are concerned. But now I come to a question which, I think, is one of great delicacy and difficulty. The Government have, at any rate, in their time and under their auspices apparently initiated a system of mutual defence by the different colonies. That is a very fine thing in spirit, and we recognise it and treasure it as an indication of the thoroughly affectionate feeling between the different branches of the Empire; but I am not sure that we are on safe ground when we proceed to bring volunteers, or soldiers of one kind or another, from one set of colonies for the purpose of garrisoning and policing others. I look, I will not say with suspicion, but with some timidity and

alarm on any such proposal. I do not think that, if adopted as a system, it would be popular, and it tends to interfere with that thorough independence of those self-governing communities which I think we ought to do our best to preserve, and any interference with which we ought to avoid. What we want in military matters in this country is to put the defence of these islands beyond doubt, and to secure our coaling stations throughout the world. Whether that necessarily involves the retention abroad of the number of battalions to which the hon. Gentleman has referred is again a matter of doubt; and whether the marine force could not be used for that purpose with great convenience to a much greater extent is another point. We ought to have a mobile force of sufficient strength for any emergency that is likely to arise. The present occasion is quite an exceptional one. The present war has imposed upon us the necessity for the employment of a force which may not be required again for years and years, and which has never been required before; and I deprecate the tendency to make the necessities and the experience of this war altogether the test or gauge of what the true naval and military policy of this country ought to be. I was glad to hear the hon. Gentleman bear testimony to the general efficiency of the present system of enlistment, and the terms of service by which the Army is maintained. I was particularly interested by what he said of his own experience as a Commissioner of Chelsea Hospital. This is a matter which has been discussed again and again in this House during the last thirty years, and I am afraid most people have not been sufficiently impressed by the great fact that has impressed the hon. Gentleman—namely, that where we have to garrison tropical countries we cannot do it with long-service men. We know, of course, that it used to be done to some extent in the old East India Company days, that the Presidency troops were sent out and kept there until they were worn out by disease and the effect of the climate; but it was a cruel system, for those who did come home were only a miserable remnant. I say it was a cruel and inhuman system, and it could not be done on so large a scale as we require. The same consideration applies to those ingenious

persons who argue in favour of the short-service system for home purposes, with some sort of special long-service enlistment for India. Let them go, as the hon. Member has gone, to the Chelsea Hospital and see the cases that come before the commissioners there. A man may remain in India for some such period as five or seven years, and yet come home a good man; but if he is kept longer he is a man who is lost for all practical purposes, either to his friends or to his country. I was glad to recognise the ability with which the hon. Gentleman spoke on that subject, and I was pleased that he bore testimony to the general excellence of the present system. Looking back, as very few of us in this House now can, for thirty years, to the days when Lord Cardwell carried his great measure through the House, it is a perfect marvel to us how much he was able to do in the course of a very few years against the very strongest opposition, and how satisfactory it is to find that although, of course, mistakes were made and exaggerations were committed no doubt, still in the main it was a beneficial agent in maintaining the security and therefore the prosperity of the Empire.

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham) said that a very able statement had been made by the Under Secretary in this House, and also by the Secretary of State for War in another place. The Prime Minister had spoken upon the question of secret service money. He wished to remind the Government that the Boers had spent £800,000 in secret service money in one year. We all knew what the result had been of their small expenditure upon this head in England. The consequence was that Her Majesty's Government formed most inadequate ideas of the military strength of the Boers, and their fighting capacity. If we looked back in history, we would find that the Intelligence Department in this country had nearly always been defective. At the time of the Crimean War we were utterly ignorant of the landing places in the Crimea and of the rivers and geography of that country. Anything more disgraceful than the ignorance of the condition of things in the Crimea it was impossible to conceive. Then there was the Abyssinian campaign. There, again, the Intelligence Department were entirely ignorant of the condition of Abyssinia, and of the fighting

power of the enemy, or of the requirements of the country in which our soldiers had to operate. The result was that that expedition cost £20,000,000, whereas, had we possessed proper information, it would have only cost about £3,000,000 or £4,000,000. Take the Ashanti War, where similar ignorance again prevailed. Then there was the expedition to Suakim, attended by the surrender of Khartoum and the loss of General Gordon. In a great hurry the Government then in power sent out an expedition to Suakim, and what did they do? They afterwards commenced building a railway, and after laying three or four miles of it, it was found absolutely unsuitable and utterly impracticable, and the material was brought back and allowed to lie at Woolwich for many years, as a monument to the ignorance of the Government and the Intelligence Department who sent it out. That Intelligence Department was made and established by the Secretary of State for War, Lord Cardwell. It might, perhaps, be of interest to the House if he contrasted the strength of the Intelligence Departments of foreign countries with that of the English Intelligence Department, and he would give a few statistics. In France the general Military Staff Department contained 245 military officers who employed 459 clerks, making a total of 704 officers, and the country spent upon them £137,166. In Germany the military staff was 310, with 666 civilians, making a total of 976 officers, and they spent no less than £270,212. In Austria the military staff contained 206 military men, 119 civilians, making a total of 325, costing £35,450. The Russian staff of the Intelligence Department contained 704 military men and 867 civilians, making a total of 1,571, and they spent the sum of £410,000. Italy had a military staff and civilians numbering 532, and they expended £64,376. Comparing that with the British Intelligence Department he found that England had only eighteen military officers and thirty-four clerks, making a total of fifty-two, and they spent £16,500 upon it. When they considered their enormous interests all over the world he thought they would conclude that the British Intelligence Department was very much under-manned and over-worked. The present chief of that Department was a very able officer of great experience, but he had not the pro-

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per support and assistance, nor sufficient money to do his duty properly. For the efficiency of the Army it was absolutely essential that their Intelligence Department should be put on a wider and more generous footing. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary had stated that he was going to send out an officer to Switzerland to report about ranges. Of course it did not follow that the reports made upon that question would be adopted. Twenty years ago he was sent out to report upon the Swiss army, and no doubt he reported upon the same matter, but what attention had been paid to that report? Two other reports had been since made, but there had not been the slightest attention paid to them by the War Office. During the time he was in Germany it was his duty to send in long reports upon the ranges there, which were carried out under conditions which we had not got in England, for they managed to practise shooting with greater facility, ease, and safety. Whether those reports were read or not he did not know. One local authority in Gloucestershire had offered to make a range themselves, provided they received some assistance, and this they were refused by the War Office. He would not further detain the House, but he earnestly trusted in the scheme which the hon. Gentleman would place before the House he would fully recognise the absolute necessity of increasing the Intelligence Department. There was no doubt that an utterly inadequate idea of the power of the Boers was entertained before they entered upon the present war. Whether that was the fault of the Intelligence Department or not he would not say; but, at all events, he thought he had made out a case that the number of officers employed in the Intelligence Department by this country was not nearly so large as in foreign countries, and the money expended upon it was considerably less. He ventured to say that he had made out a case for the serious consideration of the War Office and the Government for improving their Intelligence Department and placing it upon a more efficient footing.

MR. WYNDHAM: I believe I have no right of reply at this stage of our proceedings, and that I can only speak at this stage with the indulgence of the House. I rise now, when other Members

wish to speak, in order to point out to the House that the whole trend and tenour of this debate has consisted, with few exceptions, of a series of categorical questions addressed to myself upon points of detail and points of fact, and that it is impossible for me to reply to such questions at this stage of the debate, whereas when we get into Committee it will be easy for me to rise again and again to answer the points as they are raised. That is what I rose to say by the indulgence of the House. I feel that I must acknowledge the spirit in which the Leader of the Opposition has met the scheme which we have had to lay before Parliament this year. The right hon. Gentleman has touched upon one or two points, and he is agreed that we ought to give greater facilities for rifle shooting, and he has pointed out that this is not a land of magnificent distances, that we are not living in the Wild West; and that even the millions to be expended on ranges, as suggested by my hon. friend the Member for St. Helens, was not even practicable in this country. The Government are very anxious indeed to extend the facilities for rifle shooting. As to the new proposals, the Leader of the Opposition has accepted *en bloc* our proposals for engineers, artillery, army service corps and so forth; and even in respect to the proposal for twelve additional battalions of the Line he has really not criticised our scheme. Of course the right hon. Gentleman could not refrain from taking some exception to the arguments which I laid before the House earlier in the evening, but I really do not think that we ought to go into the historical question of Nova Scotia. We have one battalion at Halifax, and in 1627 it was upon the historical claim that the colonies based their case that it belonged to us. That, at any rate, is the historical basis of our position in that part of the world. I do not think that I need labour this argument any further, because there is practically no difference between the Government and the Opposition. When the right hon. Gentleman came to South Africa he reminded us of garrisons there with only two battalions, but my contention is that none of these were needed in consequence of Imperial expansion. I differ from him *in toto* as to that. He used the phrase that those two battalions were there partly for representing the dignity of the Empire. That is a fallacy which I should like to allude to. You cannot

put forms or symbols down to represent the dignity of the Empire. What you mean in each part of the Empire is that force which is required by the obligations and the risks of the Empire in that part of the world; and two battalions were not a sufficient garrison for South Africa last year or the year before, or since the raid, or at any time within the last twenty years. The right hon. Gentleman was a member of the Government in the year 1884, which had to send a large expedition under Sir Charles Warren into South Africa in order to impress upon the inhabitants of that country the dignity of the Empire, of which they were not properly conscious in consequence of the presence on their shores of two battalions and no more. I speak only with the indulgence of the House, and as the House generally is in accord with the broad features of the policy which I have laid down this afternoon, and as there are other speakers, I will not continue the debate further. In reply to all the points raised by my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Lewes, my reply is in the affirmative, but when we get into Committee I will elaborate my reply at a later date, when I can deal with these details and questions of fact which have been raised.

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith, in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 430,000, all ranks, be maintained for the service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): When we remember that we are discussing to-night, for the first time, a proposal for the expenditure of £61,000,000 for the military service of the Empire, I think it cannot be denied that we have had a most inadequate discussion of that very important proposal. I am bound to say that I do not think that the dignity

nor the efficacy of that discussion has been assisted very much by the contribution of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition and the late Secretary of State for War. I would ask any hon. Member who was present while the right hon. Gentleman was speaking to refresh his memory, and I would challenge him to tell us in that speech one single point of any national importance or any single suggestion that would help to a solution of the Army questions which are now agitating the public mind, although the right hon. Gentleman was for a long time responsible for the conduct of the War Office. Having studied these matters myself, I retain in my memory some recollections of the fragmentary discourse the right hon. Gentleman has favoured us with, and about those recollections I should like to say a word or two. I protest that at a critical time like this we have a right to expect something a little more coherent, something a little more in the nature of guidance, from the right hon. Gentleman who speaks on behalf of what is supposed to be a great party in the country. I am quite familiar with the ordinary course of events in this House, and I am aware that when one hon. Member on this side representing the War Department gets up and makes a statement another Member on the other side who has represented the same Department is bound to get up and say "ditto." I think that has been said to-day in a more perfunctory manner by the Leader of the Opposition than I have ever heard it said before. With regard to the system of raising troops, I shall have a word or two to say later on. I should now like to say something with regard to the reasons which the right hon. Gentleman opposite has given. He said that one point he had singled out for commendation was the proposal of my hon. friend to raise twelve new battalions, and that he was able to give his support to that because it was an admission of the success of the system which my hon. friend has been instrumental in sustaining and supporting. He went back once more to the Cardwell system, but I challenge the right hon. Gentleman and any hon. Member of this House who has the slightest knowledge of military matters to contradict my proposition when I say that, except for one or two remnants, the Cardwell

system is as dead as a doornail. Every single item which was characteristic of that system, save one, has now absolutely departed, and I will take one single instance which the right hon. Gentleman quoted as a sort of example which he said was a matter which he was happy to say had not been touched. He spoke about long service, and he said that anybody who knew the facts at Chelsea Hospital would admit that long service was out of the question, and that the Cardwell system was destined to endure for ever because the condition of the men at Chelsea showed that long service had been a failure in India. I want to point out this—that the period of service which was a necessary condition of the Cardwell system has long since ceased to be the period of service in the British Army; that so far from long service being discontinued by the War Office, there are at this moment serving in the British Army more long service men than there would be if the whole Army had been recruited on a twelve years basis. I entirely fail to see why it should be supposed that a man who has the ability to serve this long term should be compelled to serve that period in a tropical country, and I fail entirely to recognise the authorship of the argument which the right hon. Gentleman has repudiated to the effect that we ought to have an exclusively Indian Army and an exclusively home Army. I have often advocated—and those who agree with me have advocated a totally separate establishment for general service Army apart from that which we retain for home service, but no one has ever suggested that we should confine the general service army to India. When the right hon. Gentleman tells us we should look upon the Cardwell system as something which we are bound to preserve, I would point out to him that we have long ago abandoned the principle of that system. We began with six years and came down to five years; we then tried to get the men to retire after four years, and when we made a change it was all in the other direction, for we extended the service to seven years and then to eight years. During a period of war my hon. friend brought 5,000 men from the first-class army Reserve, all seven-years men, who are now serving for a twelve-years period; and now we are offering a bounty of 22 and paying £1,600,000 to bring back twelve years men to the ranks. It is a

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perfect dream to say that this Cardwell system has any existence at the present time. If that is the only remnant of the Cardwell system, I am glad to know that that part of the scheme is as dead as the rest is, with one unfortunate exception, which I hope will be dead soon. With regard to my hon. friend the Under Secretary of State for War, I feel rather differently. He has addressed himself to a totally different subject. The House seems to have been carried away by the exceedingly attractive way in which he has presented his case, but I could not help feeling that my hon. friend's speech, to a certain extent, was like the tail of a comet, exceedingly brilliant but capable of being compressed into a teacup. When we come to analyse what he told us about things which we really wanted to know, we find that he told us very little indeed. He picked out all those things which the War Office are going to do, and which we desire they should do. We have heard that they are going to do a great many things, which, to my mind, are the primary duties of the office, and of course when the hon. Member told us they were going to do those things we were glad to hear that they at least realised the importance of carrying them out. He also told us that these proposals were to a very large extent in the nature of emergency proposals, and certainly it does not lie in the mouth of any Englishman to interfere with the work of a great Department like his at a time when we know he is doing his very best to meet an emergency of which I am sure he does not exaggerate the gravity. But I am bound to repeat what I have said *ad nauseam* in this House, that while admitting the necessity for these proposals we do not admit by implication that although these things may be necessary this year they are necessary or desirable in any subsequent year. That would be a most unfortunate admission. It so happens, however, that the two sets of proposals were almost inextricably bound together in the speech of my hon. friend. My hon. friend in one respect agrees with the right hon. Gentleman opposite—he implores us not to touch what he calls the ripe fruit of thirty years of War Office progress. It is all very well to appeal to us with regard to the ripe fruit of the War Office. My suggestion is that the fruit is rotten, not ripe, and I do not think it is hard to give proof of that. If it could be honestly shown that all

these years of effort have produced something of which we ought to be proud and pleased with, I would say: "Do not go to the root at all; prune it if you like." But that is not the fact, and the proof of it is this—that after all these thirty years of endeavour, the very first time we get into a serious war every single item of War Office procedure has to be overhauled. You have had to ask the House to vote millions for emergency proposals; everything that was condemned in the past is approved of in the present, and everything that we were invited to pass over and discard is now commended to our special attention. It is not correct to say it is ripe fruit; it is very rotten fruit indeed. I note that the Leader of the House has always cheered any statement to the effect that our system has provided all that it was expected it would provide. I think that fact affords a very unfortunate insight into the state of mind of my right hon. friend, and is a very strong reason why he should not take any very prominent part—to say the least of it—in the discussions of the Defence Committee. It may be perfectly true that the sole aim of the War Office was simply to provide the equivalent of two army corps for a foreign war—I am not responsible for so limited a desire—but if my right hon. friend is satisfied with the consequences entailed by raising these two, then he is very easily satisfied indeed. What has happened? Everybody knew that it was perfectly easy with the resources of this country to send 60,000 or 70,000 men into the field. Nobody doubted that, and if it could not have been done, there is no member of the War Office who should not have been impeached. To suppose that 80,000 or 90,000 men could not have been put into the field would be something so absurd that no Member of this House would like to pledge his reputation in support of such a proposition. It is about the equivalent of what the War Office of Bulgaria or Servia would have produced without turning a hair. But when it is done, what is the result—what is the residue? The residue is the state of things now existing in this country—a perfect military chaos which we have heard described time after time by hon. Members, and into which the country is now at last getting some clear insight. If it was really the War Office plan that the effort of despatching some 70,000 or

80,000 men should so exhaust the whole of their resources that we should be practically without any military organisation at home, all I say is, how little the War Office calculated what the necessities of the Empire are. We were for months face to face with a war which was not only possible but probable, and which was contemplated by nine people out of every ten. That war being upon us, we find ourselves in an emergency on account of which my hon. friend has been making his important speech to-night, and in respect to which we are asked to vote so many millions. I do not like the mixing up of the temporary and permanent proposals; still less do I like the absence from the speech of my hon. friend of anything like a guide to what we are to expect with regard to our future organisation. I will undertake to say that not a single Member of this House who has been present during the discussion has gathered from my hon. friend's speech the slightest idea as to what is to be the guiding principle of our military organisation in the future. I do not know what is the logical justification for the perpetuation of a system under which three forces—the Line, the Militia, and the Volunteers—are to be perpetually retained in active and disastrous competition with each other. I can understand a system, with a man at the head of it, organised with some idea as to why the three forces should be separate. There would be duties for the Line, duties for the Militia, and duties for the Volunteers. But going about the country as I do, I see a fierce competition between the Line, the Militia, and the Volunteers, and I see an equally fierce competition between the officers of these three forces. I see that whenever a boon is granted to one service, I will not say it is grudged, but it is scrutinised by the men and officers of the other two, who ask why it should not have been given to them, as if the very fact of its being given it to one took it away from the others. That is a disastrous competition. You see the effect of it every year for years past in the Militia. Thousands and tens of thousands of men are passed into the Militia and out of the Militia into the Line, weakening one and strengthening the other, but not strengthening the aggregate force of the country. Last year we had an effort made to extend this system by introducing it into the Volunteers, and by compelling sergeant-instructors of Volun-

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teers to be touts for recruiting for the Militia and the Line. There is no help and no guidance at all given to the public on this question. There is not a scintilla of evidence that it has been really grasped. My hon. friend told us the other day that our present system was a cheap system. That I dispute. He told us he did not want us to touch this fruit-bearing tree. I do not hold with that view at all. I say that until you knock this tree down absolutely you will never get any real permanent improvement in our military system. We have been lopping off branches one by one. Some of the worst parts of the system have happily been destroyed, but you may go on lopping off branches as long as you please—you may destroy every branch—but until you go to the root of the system you will never mend matters. My hon. friend talks about the necessity of perpetually retaining the system of double battalions, and speaks as if there were something essential about this amazing plan of double battalions. How wasteful it is has been already pointed out by my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean. He has told us that in order to continue this addition to our forces abroad we must ask for more battalions than that we are asked to-night to provide. I go further, and say that the House ought not to vote these twelve additional battalions until the system on which our battalions are recruited is altered. My hon. friend has promised to answer some of the queries asked to-night; I hope he will answer this query. I ask him what guarantee he is going to give to the public that these battalions will be raised, and if they are raised that they will not be subject to the eternal law which affects every one of our battalions at the present moment. My hon. friend said that ours was a cheap and economical system. I believe it is the most extravagant system in any army in the world, with the possible exception of that of the United States army in time of war. I believe it is even more expensive than what I may call the microscopic system of the Australian colonies with regard to their permanent forces. The Committee is asked to sanction the raising of twelve new battalions. I want to ask the Committee whether, as sensible men, they agree that that is a desirable thing to do. These twelve battalions are to be in addition to the three bogus battalions voted last year, but not yet raised, and which may perhaps be

raised during the feeling created by the present war, but which under normal circumstances could not be raised at all. Now I want the Committee to realise what is the future of the recruits enlisted in these battalions. We enlist men under the Cardwell system with the idea that they are to pass into the Reserve; 35,000 men are enlisted, and within a period of a soldier's time in the ranks how many of these men disappear? Fifty per cent.; something like 16,000 or 17,000 men absolutely disappear, and only the remainder pass into the Reserve. Take the period of a soldier's term as six years, or, in order to meet the present facts, seven years, and I say it is perfectly preposterous that during that period 50 per cent. of your enlisted forces should absolutely vanish into space. I should like to inform the Committee at what period these men disappear. Take 1897-8, the last normal year for which figures are available. I find that there were either discharged from the Army or deserted—and I include among the deserters only the net total—no less than 15,123 men, and if you take that figure back to the average of the three previous years or six years back, the period during which these men enlisted, you will find that the total number from which these men disappeared was 31,000 men. When it is realised that the number of men who have disappeared by discharge or desertion in one year alone is greater than the number going into the Reserve, the Committee will admit that I am justified in saying that the system is a wasteful system. But that is not the whole of it or the worst of it. Of these 15,000 men no less than 8,000 deserted or were discharged from the Army when under twenty-two years of age; that is to say, that out of 31,000 men, 8,000 men were absolutely lost to the Army. We have heard something about the expense of barrack accommodation and the initial cost of every soldier, but I submit that if we could stop that desertion and the discharge of immature and unfit men, we would be able to save sufficient expenditure to add another army corps to the Army. I have always objected, and will always object, to the double battalion system on many grounds, but I object above all things to our present system of recruiting, because it is the most terribly wasteful and most extravagantly expensive system ever devised for any army. The answer

which is invariably given—perhaps my hon. friend will not give it as he has introduced many new methods—but the answer which has been given is that in the past history of the War Office—in the days of Cressy and Agincourt and the Crimean War—it cost ten and twenty times as much to produce a soldier as it does now. There is no fault in the present administration of the War Office which cannot perhaps be paralleled and exceeded in its past administration, and to that extent I am prepared to agree; but surely it is not business-like, nor wise, nor expedient to go on recruiting on a system of this kind. There is one other consideration I should like to mention before we decide to vote these twelve new battalions. I ventured to say the other day that our double battalion system was not one fitted for the exigencies of this Empire. I have said many times that whatever other virtues the double battalion system may have, it is not one capable of meeting the sudden demands certain to be made on a military organisation such as ours. My hon. friend talks about the ripe fruit of thirty years experience, but I say that not once in the whole history of the double battalion system has it been tested without failure. Every time we have had to send a force abroad that system failed absolutely, and we have had to resort to drafts and to every illicit expenditure to bring the force required up to a condition to go abroad. Now, when for the first time we are compelled to utilise the Army as a whole, the system has left us absolutely without any organised force at home. That is not the whole or the worst of it. I am sure my hon. friend has an answer—I should like to know what it is—when I allege that at the commencement of this war it was impossible to send out from this country one single battalion or one single regiment of cavalry in an efficient condition without breaking up the whole regimental system by drafts, or without calling out the first class Army Reserve. We know that the battalions were withheld not when war was certain only, but after war was declared, and for ten days after the declaration of war, when 10,000 men might have been the salvation of the campaign, not one single organised unit was sent from these shores. My hon. friend has told us that this was owing to the forethought and discrimination of the

War Office, and that they did not desire nor intend to send any men from this country. They thought India was nearer, and they preferred to send men from that country and from the Mediterranean garrisons to reinforce Sir George White in Natal. I take leave with great respect to enter a caveat against the acceptance of that conclusion. I do not comment on the miscalculation which led the War Office to believe that 10,000 men were adequate for the purpose. Of course they were absurdly inadequate. I know that 5,000 men were taken from India which ought never to have been taken, that a large number were taken from our colonial garrisons which ought never to have been taken, and that at that time no complete battalion was sent out from the home establishment and no artillery, except one brigade division, which had been under orders for many months. I challenge my hon. friend to give the name of any single battalion of infantry which was in a fit condition at the beginning of September to be sent into the field in South Africa. If he will give me the name of any such battalion I will refer to the Return he gave me a few months ago to ascertain the condition of that battalion as there shown. I will take the judgment of that Return, and will ask him if the facts in it are correct, and whether he considers a battalion which requires 300, 400, or 500 men is efficient and in a fit state to take part in war. I think we are all agreed that we must have a system which will enable us to have complete battalions to bear the first brunt of war. Under the present system we have never had such battalions, and that we shall not have them now I am prepared to prove. I see no indication whatever in the speech of my hon. friend that it is intended to make things better in this respect. I listened with great satisfaction and great approval to many things which were said by my hon. friend in regard to the temporary proposals. I do not think we are entitled—at any rate I do not intend to make any comment on them at all. With regard to the Militia I should like to know a little more clearly what is the obligation imposed on them to go abroad under certain circumstances. I do not think we ought to be left in any doubt in this matter. Either the Militia are to go abroad or they are not, and I know there is considerable confusion in the

matter. We are told that the Army Reserve was not intended to be called out except in case of national emergency. The term "national emergency" has received a very wide construction—a construction which I am certain was not in the minds either of those who originally framed the scheme, or of most of the soldiers who accepted the engagement to turn out with the Reserve. I think we ought to consider to what extent we should get that help, if it be made clear that the Reserve is in future to constitute the first line and not be a Reserve at all. With regard to the Militia the question is still more important. If we are to be told that every time this country is engaged in war the Militia is to be sent abroad, I do not say we shall not get the Militia, but I do say we shall be recruiting under totally different conditions from those which now exist. I hope my hon. friend will tell us exactly the terms on which the Militia is to be engaged, and the exact construction put upon that rather loose phrase "a national emergency." In conclusion, we shall welcome—if my hon. friend cares to favour us with such an expression of opinion—a little illumination upon some of the wider administrative questions with regard to the Army. He seems to assume that everything that has happened has redounded to the credit of the system, but I do not think that is the general opinion. My hon. friend has frequently qualified that statement, and perhaps I ought to attribute it to the First Lord of the Treasury. I think we do require something to restore public confidence in an administration which has landed us in the position we now stand. We talk about these details in the House of Commons. No doubt they are very important, but what the country is thinking of is not the question of details at all. It is shocked and horrified to find that the duties which in other countries are considered to be the very first duties of a war administration have not been performed, and that when a state of things arises which was not after all such an extraordinary state of things as the right hon. Gentleman seems to suppose—a state of things which has faced every European nation in turn—we are suddenly compelled to begin doing those things which every other country does as a matter of course as a preparation for the contingencies of war.

Mr. Arnold-Forster.

It is absolutely idle at this hour of the day to ask us, as my hon. friend does, to believe that all these measures will be carried to a satisfactory conclusion—I will not say because my hon. friend says it, because that is the best guarantee they will be carried to a satisfactory conclusion—but merely because they are propounded by an organisation to which he belongs. To most people's mind that is almost a conclusive argument in favour of a contrary conclusion. During the eight years I have been in this House, and for many years before that, I have watched the proceedings of this Department, and I cannot recall a single year during the period of my observation and membership in which I have not seen the positive assurances of the War Office disproved by facts which no one could deny. I cannot recall a single session in which they have not been compelled by the exigencies of circumstances to withdraw some scheme to which they had previously pledged their whole authority. I say that at the present moment, unless we have something which appeals to the common sense of the nation, there will be no restoration of that feeling of confidence in the War Office which we all desire should exist, and which the presence of my hon. friend at the War Office is calculated to sustain.

*MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I need hardly assure the House that I am not a military man. It may, perhaps, be more necessary to state that I make no pretence to have any intimate knowledge of military matters. I therefore rise rather for the purpose of obtaining information than of criticising the Estimates. Yet there are, I think, one or two points which even a humble civilian Member like myself may to some extent presume to understand. The first point to which I should like to direct the attention of the Under Secretary has reference to the proposed augmentation of the home establishment. I understand that there is going to be a very considerable augmentation of the home establishment, and necessarily that will involve a considerable increase of expenditure. If merely from a pecuniary point of view, the matter, therefore, deserves very serious consideration. I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the real reason for this proposed augmentation. It has been suggested by the hon. and

gallant Member for Yarmouth that the proposal springs from an apprehension of invasion. If that be the real reason, then I confess that I agree altogether with the hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth; for it seems to me to be self-evident that the power of invasion must depend upon sea power. If it has taken this country five months to throw 107,000 Regular troops into South Africa, with all the shipping facilities which we as the supreme Naval Power possess, how much longer would it take a foreign Power without our maritime strength to throw anything like that number on our shores? Such an apprehension can scarcely be the reason that moves the Government. I rather gather from the speech of the Under Secretary that there was some sort of idea of symmetrical proportion underlying the proposal of the Government; the argument being that because there was a certain number of battalions employed abroad there was therefore a necessity for keeping a corresponding number of battalions at home. But a mere desire for equilibrium, while it may be artistic, is no adequate reason for increasing the expenditure of the country so largely, as it must be increased if the proposed augmentation takes place. If the equilibrium depends upon something else, I want to know from the hon. Gentleman what that something is, for it only adds to the seriousness of the whole matter. The hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that at this moment if he wants any number of men he has only to ask to get what he wants; but I think that the onus is upon him, when he is putting the country to so great expense, to show that there is an adequate reason for his action. For there is a danger to be avoided. We all know that in this House there are a number of hon. and gallant Members who, with the best intentions in the world, are very desirous of seeing the Army increased, and constantly increased. I verily believe that if every adult in the United Kingdom were in arms to-morrow these Gentlemen even then would scarcely be persuaded that this country was sufficiently defended. We may sacrifice too much to professional military enthusiasm, especially in an hour of military excitement. I therefore desire the hon. Gentleman to give, at least to me, a civilian who does not understand military matters, some

substantial reason for establishing that equilibrium between the home and foreign battalions. The only other point to which I wish to draw the attention of the Under Secretary is the necessity of efficiency with the service rifle. This matter has been mooted to-night by the hon. Member for St. Helens, but I do not go to the same length as he does. I do not think it is possible to turn the whole country into a sort of shooting gallery because we have had a certain amount of difficulty with the Boers. One lesson we, however, have learned from the Boers, and that is the absolute necessity of having something like proficiency in shooting on the part of our soldiers. I find from an answer I received to-day from the Financial War Secretary, that so far from endeavouring to improve the shooting of our soldiers, the last regulations issued from the War Office have actually cut two hundred yards off the ranges necessary to qualify for efficiency. Until last year, before a man could be pronounced a marksman, he had to pass at an eight hundred yards range, but now I find that if he passes at six hundred yards he has qualified himself to become a marksman. Now, when you consider how very seldom our forces have been within six hundred yards of the Boers, it seems to be an extraordinary thing that the range qualification should be so reduced. The hon. Member may have an adequate reason for the change, but I ask for some explanation, and if there is no adequate explanation then I think the sooner we go back to the eight hundred yards range, the better it will be for our soldiers.

*COLONEL MILWARD (Stratford-on-Avon): The hon. Member for Belfast levelled a large amount of extremely destructive criticism at the Army and the War Office. I venture to hope that, with his very great ability and knowledge, he will give us some idea of constructive legislation for the Army and the War Office. In the course of his remarks, he asked the Under Secretary for War whether we are to be subject to some "eternal law," though he did not give us any explanation of what "eternal law" was. I am not familiar with any "eternal law." There was one strong point the hon. Member raised, however, and that is, that this enormous Vote has been very inadequately discussed in the

Mr. Hedderwick.

House so far. If I may venture to say so, that accusation should be levelled more at hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House. If these hon. Gentlemen should go to the country, and complain of the enormous sums which the Government are asking for the Army, I trust it would be remembered that, with the exception of the hon. and gallant Member for Forfarshire, and the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, scarcely any criticism has come from the Opposition. We are asked to-night to vote no less than sixty-one millions to be expended on the Army. It reminds me of a speech by Mr. Gladstone in 1873, in which he said that the House was extravagant as to expenditure, but mean as to taxation. I am glad to think that the last part of Mr. Gladstone's statement is not true in the present instance. One cannot but congratulate the Government on the extraordinary way in which the House and the country have agreed to vote this money. So far as I have heard, there has not been a single murmur as to the means by which the money is to be raised; the patriotism of the country is equal to the sacrifice. I have very strong sympathy with the hon. and gallant Member for Forfarshire—himself a member of the Regular Army, and desirous that everything should be done to carry on the war to a successful issue—when he expressed the hope that this enormous increase in Army expenditure should not be perpetual. I myself am against anything like militarism in this country. The Under Secretary of State for War pointed out that we had added lately 28,000 men to the Army, and on this occasion he comes forward with an estimate for an increase of 100,000 men. I do not know whether the original 28,000 is included in the 100,000. I think that the 28,000 was sufficient for the increased territory which we have annexed. It is true that from our point of view we are only providing for the protection of that increased territory; but from a foreign point of view, the question is looked at in a very different way, and that has given rise to what is called foreign complications. I do not believe in foreign complications or that foreign complications will arise. We have an historical parallel to the present position in the circumstances of the American Civil War. There was a time during that war when the Emperor

Napoleon was pressing for the recognition of the Confederate States, and there was even a motion brought before this House by Mr. Roebuck demanding that recognition. But the moment General Grant won his victory at Vicksburg, and General Lee was defeated at Gettysburg, all questions of foreign interference disappeared. I cannot help thinking that the gallant deeds of our soldiers under General Roberts and General Buller in South Africa will dissipate all idea of foreign complications. It is impossible to think that we shall require for very long the enormous number of troops we have in South Africa; and therefore I hope that in three or four months time we shall restore 50,000 troops seasoned in the war to this country, which will enable us to meet any possible difficulty which may arise in foreign countries. I was interested to learn that two regiments had been raised in India for the purpose of garrisoning Mauritius. I would be very glad to hear that the principle of raising Indian Regiments for Mauritius will be applied to other parts of our Eastern Empire, such as Hong Kong, and in this way liberate our troops for home service, and enable us to do with fewer in the future than we are now raising. There is another point in connection with this subject. I would like to remind the Under Secretary that India at present is dangerously depleted of European troops. The occupation of Chitral and the extension of our territories in the North West has locked up as many as four and a half brigades in the north of India. I am aware that the object of Lord Curzon is to withdraw these brigades, and use native Militia instead; but still the time will come, even when the troops from India now in South Africa have returned, when we must increase the number of British troops in India, and this ought to be taken into consideration by the Under Secretary. There are proposals before the House for increasing the Volunteers and Militia, and among the questions mooted by hon. Members was that of the ballot for the Militia. I am extremely glad that the Government has not accepted that view, and has not proposed to introduce the ballot for the Militia. The Under Secretary has very clearly pointed out that it would be impossible to ballot for the Regular Army, considering the fact that one half of it is permanently stationed

abroad. But what would be the effect of instituting a ballot for the Militia? All the best men would go into the Volunteers, and it would absolutely stop all volunteering for the Militia. Then every man who was drawn for the Militia and who did not care to serve, would have to find a substitute, and would offer a bonus of £30, £40, or £50 to such substitute. Now, the men who would otherwise join the Militia would wait to have the opportunity of getting that bonus. The result would be that you would get the very lowest class of men for the Militia. And the effect would be that the small, struggling shopkeepers and men belonging to the lower middle class of society, who were drawn in the ballot, but who could not raise the £30, £40, or £50 to purchase a substitute, would be compelled to live and serve together with the very lowest classes in the community. I hope the Government will increase the attractions of the Militia, as well as of the other military forces of the Empire, and that they will offer higher rates of pay. I will only detain the House with a word or two in regard to rifle ranges. I disagree with an hon. Member who ably argued that this is an Imperial matter, and was very anxious to see this question remitted to a Committee. I say that as the courts of quarter sessions had formerly the duty laid upon them of providing barracks for the Militia, so the county councils should have laid upon them the necessity of providing and maintaining suitable rifle ranges. Let the War Office point out where these ranges are to be, but their provision and maintenance all over the country should be laid on the county councils. That may be popular or unpopular, and it would cause a great deal of local expense; but it would not lead to so much expense as if the ranges and their maintenance were made an Imperial charge. I cordially support the measures indicated by Her Majesty's Government. I hope there will be no panic—the time for panic is passed—and no panic legislation. I hope we shall strengthen and perfect the military organisation of the country, and then I am perfectly clear that, without any fear, we can face the whole world in arms.

COLONEL PILKINGTON (Lancashire, Newton): I have noticed there is a sort of feeling of optimism in the House to-

night—that we have done well in Africa, and that the new proposals are everything that can be desired. I wish to congratulate my hon. friend on the excellent manner in which he presented the Vote; and I feel sure that the vast amount of money he asked for, and that is going to be spent, ought to produce some good results. But I cannot forget that during the last four months the work which the Regular Army ought to have performed in South Africa has been done by something like 100,000 troops, a third of whom are Militia, and probably 15,000 colonial troops. This country is stripped of troops, and those that remain are youths or Volunteers without any equipment, transport, or organisation. It does not appear to me that the proposals of the Government will prevent anything like this happening again in the future. I do think that what has happened is neither creditable to the War Office nor this House. I believe that the war ought to be conducted by Regular troops, and that not a man from the Militia, Yeomanry, or Volunteers ought to have gone to South Africa. Hon. Members have said that whatever number of men the Government asked for would be got. Perhaps you could get a million to volunteer, but you would not have arms for 500,000. Suppose that the great empire of Russia were to declare war against England, we should want 300,000 British troops in India, and should have to feed that army with 150,000 reinforcements every year. If our Army was not sufficient to supply these, the only result would be the loss of India. If we are to consider the question of the Volunteers and Yeomanry it should be in the light of that position. Now, every Volunteer in this country can resign to-morrow if he chooses. My contention is that it ought to be a condition that Volunteers should join for a certain period, say five years, and that then they should go into a reserve. What we have got to aim at is, a sufficient number of trained men who know a great deal about drill and everything about shooting.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

Colonel Pilkington.

SUPPLY [9TH MARCH].

Resolutions reported:—

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES), 1899-1900.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £47,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge for the Ordnance Factories (the cost of the Productions of which will be charged to the Army, Navy, and Indian and Colonial Governments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900."

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £60,300 be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense necessary to be provided for under the Arrangement made between the Imperial and Australasian Governments, for the protection of Floating Trade in Australasian Waters, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Resolutions agreed to.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLAUSE 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

RIFLE RANGES.

Address for "Return showing how many purchases of land for the purpose of forming rifle ranges have been made by County or Borough Councils or Volunteer Corps, under the provisions of 54 and 55 Vic., c. 54 (The Ranges Act, 1891), and where the lands so acquired are respectively situated."—(*Mr. Radcliffe Cooke.*)

Adjourned at ten minutes after
Twelve of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 13th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—

Hammond (G.H.) Company [H.L.]

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

ARMY AND NAVY INVESTMENT TRUST BILL [H.L.].

NEW RUSSIA COMPANY BILL [H.L.].
Committed.

DONEGAL RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].
Committed for Friday next.

FOLKESTONE, SANDGATE, AND HYTHE TRAMROADS BILL [H.L.].

Committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

LANCASHIRE INEBRIATES ACTS BOARD BILL [H.L.].

Committee to meet on Friday next.

IPSWICH CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

LINCOLN CORPORATION (TRAMWAYS) BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bills, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; the orders made on the 23rd of February, and Tuesday last discharged; and Bills committed.

FALKIRK CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; the orders made on the 23rd of February and Tuesday last discharged; and Bill committed.

VOL LXXX. [FOURTH SERIES.]

DUNDEE HARBOUR BILL [H.L.]

Reported with Amendments.

PURFLEET AND GRAVESEND JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

Read 2^a (according to order).

LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

GLYNCORRWG URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL GAS BILL [H.L.].

CLEETHORPES GAS BILL [H.L.].

FISHGUARD WATER AND GAS BILL [H.L.].

BARRY RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL [H.L.].

MOUNTAIN ASH WATER BILL [H.L.].

COWES PIER BILL [H.L.].

PAIGNTON URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

EXMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

EXMOUTH AND DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills (namely):—

E. Stamford,
V. Templetown,
L. Elgin (E. Elgin and Kincardine),
(chairman),
L. Napier.
L. Somerton (E. Normanton);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Wednesday, the 21st instant, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions, referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

ST. DAVID'S RAILWAY (ABANDONMENT) BILL.

DUBLIN ELECTRIC LIGHTING BILL.

BLACKPOOL, ST. ANNE'S AND LYTHAM TRAMWAYS BILL.

Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next.

2 E

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AFRICA, No. 2 (1900).

Correspondence with the Presidents of the South African Republic and of the Orange Free State respecting the war. Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899
(METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS).

Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of each of the under-mentioned Metropolitan Boroughs and incorporating the Council thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith:— Battersea, Bermondsey, Bethnal Green, Deptford, Fulham, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith, Hampstead, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Poplar, St. Marylebone, Shoreditch, Southwark, Stoke Newington, Wandsworth, and Woolwich. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 27.)

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL [H.L.].

Petition against; of superintendent and teachers of the Congregational Sunday-school, Eccles; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM BILL
[H.L.].

A Bill to amend the law relating to the Court of Chancery of the County Palatine of Durham was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 28.)

MONEY LENDING BILL [H.L.]

Reported from the Standing Committee with amendments: The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 29.)

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—OVERTURES
BY THE REPUBLICS FOR PEACE.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: As the noble Marquess the head of the Government is in his place, I wish to ask him a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether he is in a position to state to the House any answer which Her Majesty's Government have thought fit to give to the overtures

for peace made by the Presidents of the two Boer Republics.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I have brought down to the House to lay on the Table the telegrams which contain the information the noble Earl desires. Perhaps he will not think me out of order if I read them to him. They are not long. The following telegram was addressed by the two Presidents on the 5th of March to Her Majesty's Secretary of State—

"The Presidents of the Orange Free State and of the South African Republic to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 6.)

"Bloemfontein, March 5, 1900.

"The blood and the tears of the thousands who have suffered by this war, and the prospect of all the moral and economic ruin with which South Africa is now threatened, make it necessary for both belligerents to ask themselves dispassionately, and as in the sight of the Triune God, for what they are fighting, and whether the aim of each justifies all this appalling misery and devastation.

"With this object, and in view of the assertions of various British statesmen to the effect that this war was begun and is being carried on with the set purpose of undermining Her Majesty's authority in South Africa, and of setting up an Administration over all South Africa independent of Her Majesty's Government, we consider it our duty solemnly to declare that this war was undertaken solely as a defensive measure to safeguard the threatened independence of the South African Republic, and is only continued in order to secure and safeguard the incontestable independence of both Republics as sovereign international States, and to obtain the assurance that those of Her Majesty's subjects who have taken part with us in this war shall suffer no harm whatsoever in person or property.

"On these conditions, and on these conditions alone, are we now, as in the past, desirous of seeing peace re-established in South Africa, and of putting an end to the evils now reigning over South Africa; while, if Her Majesty's Government is determined to destroy the independence of the Republics, there is nothing left to us and to our people but to persevere to the end in the course already begun, in spite of the overwhelming pre-eminence of the British Empire, confident that that God who lighted the unextinguishable fire of the love of freedom in the hearts of ourselves and of our fathers will not forsake us, but will accomplish His work in us and in our descendants.

"We hesitated to make this declaration earlier to your Excellency, as we feared that as long as the advantage was always on our side, and as long as our forces held defensive positions far in Her Majesty's colonies, such a declaration might hurt the feelings of honour of the British people; but now that the pres-

tige of the British Empire may be considered to be assured by the capture of one of our forces by Her Majesty's troops, and that we are thereby forced to evacuate other positions which our forces had occupied, that difficulty is over, and we can no longer hesitate clearly to inform your Government and people in the sight of the whole civilised world why we are fighting, and on what conditions we are ready to restore peace."

To that message the following answer was addressed by me on behalf of Her Majesty's Government—

"The Marquess of Salisbury to the Presidents of the South African Republic and Orange Free State.

"Foreign Office, 11th March, 1900.

"I have the honour to acknowledge your Honours' telegram dated the 5th of March from Bloemfontein, of which the purport is principally to demand that Her Majesty's Government shall recognise the 'incontestable independence' of the South African Republic and Orange Free State 'as sovereign international States,' and to offer, on those terms, to bring the war to a conclusion.

"In the beginning of October last peace existed between Her Majesty and the two Republics under the Conventions which then were in existence. A discussion had been proceeding for some months between Her Majesty's Government and the South African Republic, of which the object was to obtain redress for certain very serious grievances under which British residents in the South African Republic were suffering. In the course of these negotiations the South African Republic had to the knowledge of Her Majesty's Government made considerable armaments, and the latter had consequently taken steps to provide corresponding reinforcements to the British garrisons of Cape Town and Natal. No infringement of the rights guaranteed by the Conventions had up to that point taken place on the British side. Suddenly, at two days notice, the South African Republic, after issuing an insulting ultimatum, declared war upon Her Majesty, and the Orange Free State, with whom there had not even been any discussion, took a similar step. Her Majesty's dominions were immediately invaded by the two Republics, siege was laid to three towns within the British frontier, a large portion of the two colonies was overrun, with great destruction to property and life, and the Republics claimed to treat the inhabitants of extensive portions of Her Majesty's dominions as if those dominions had been annexed to one or other of them. In anticipation of these operations the South African Republic had been accumulating for many years past military stores on an enormous scale, which, by their character, could only have been intended for use against Great Britain.

"Your Honours make some observations of a negative character upon the object with which these preparations were made. I do not think it necessary to discuss the questions you have raised. But the result of these preparations, carried on with great secrecy, has been that the British Empire has been

compelled to confront an invasion which has entailed upon the Empire a costly war and the loss of thousands of precious lives. This great calamity has been the penalty which Great Britain has suffered for having in recent years acquiesced in the existence of the two Republics.

"In view of the use to which the two Republics have put the position which was given to them, and the calamities which their unprovoked attack has inflicted upon Her Majesty's dominions, Her Majesty's Government can only answer your Honours' telegram by saying that they are not prepared to assent to the independence either of the South African Republic or of the Orange Free State."

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five of the clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 13th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS 62 AND 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Orders Nos. 62 and 63 have been complied with, viz. :—

Metropolitan Water Companies Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—

Christchurch, Bournemouth, and Winton Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PONTEFRAC T PARK BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY (IRELAND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

HUNTINGDON CORPORATION BILL
(BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

*Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport): This Bill is introduced by the Corporation of Huntingdon, and its object is to enclose the whole of the common land surrounding the town, amounting to 356 acres. They also seek to take powers to utilise the land for building purposes, either by sale or by lease, and to dispose of it in any way they may think proper. Now, the population of Huntingdon is a very small one, something under 4,500, and, although the promoters of the Bill claim that the town, being completely surrounded by these lands, is practically strangled, I think that it is a very large order on their part to ask for powers to enclose the whole of these common lands. But the object of my motion is, in the first place, to raise a very important question of principle which this Bill violates. I shall also have a word or two to say upon the merits of the Bill itself. The principles laid down by the Enclosure Acts are being violated by this Bill, which proposes to enclose without enquiry commons, to extinguish all common rights, and to vest the soil of the common lands in the corporation. They claim that they own the soil, but other people deny their title. The persons entitled to the right to use the commons are freemen of the borough and widows of freemen. They number at present thirty-three, and it is proposed by this Bill that their interest shall be extinguished, and that, in compensation, they shall receive an annuity amounting to £748 a year, to be equally divided among them. The principle of that proposal is a bad one. The corporation also propose to appropriate a sum which is at present invested in Consols, amounting to £9,000, representing the proceeds of the sales of certain portions of the lands, made from time to time to railway companies and other public bodies, and to utilise it in paying the annuities. On the merits of the Bill, my objection in the first place is that this small corporation seeks to embark

on what is really nothing more or less than a land-jobbing scheme, and in order to do this they propose to extinguish the freemen's rights by a most pernicious system of doles. I fancy that this House holds rather strong opinions upon doles generally, and I do not think it is likely to approve a proposal to establish permanently an annuity fund to be distributed in all future years to a class which will certainly increase in numbers when it is discovered that there is some pecuniary advantage attaching to the freedom of the borough. No doubt at the present moment many people who are entitled to claim their freemanship have not done so because they have not thought it worth while, but the moment it is discovered that this annuity is to be distributed they will certainly take up their right of freedom, with the result that their numbers will be largely increased, the doles will be sub-divided again and again, and a system pauperising in character will be set up. The corporation urge that it will be to the benefit of the neighbourhood to pass this scheme, because they will then be able to provide public recreation grounds and parks for the benefit of the people. They also allege that, at the present moment, the public have no right over these commons for recreation. I should like to see them test that point. If I went down there to play a game of cricket on these lands, I should like to see the corporation test their allegation by bringing an action against me. I think they would find that they had a very bad case. What is the *quid pro quo* they offer for the 356 acres they propose to enclose? They are only going to give the public 10½ acres of land, and I say that is a very serious defect in this Bill. Only within the last two or three days, the promoters have revealed another weakness in their scheme. I read in yesterday's *Times* a letter, signed by the mayor and two councillors of the borough, in which they stated there was an erroneous impression that it was intended to build on the whole of this land, and they added that it was impossible to do that, as such an undertaking would occupy two centuries. Why then have they asked permission to enclose these 356 acres for building purposes, when they know and admit that they have not the slightest intention of covering the whole of the land for two centuries? Surely there must

be some more moderate course open to them. Now, the rights of freemen differ in many respects from the ordinary rights enjoyed by commoners. Generally speaking, common rights are attached to freehold or copyhold property, and people who have a property in those rights can sell them, and so they may be gradually extinguished. But the freemen's rights are vested in the whole body of freemen, and it is therefore impossible to extinguish them in the same way as ordinary common rights. The result is that these freemen will go on increasing in number, and this annuity will be split up into many sub-divisions. But the main objection I have to this Bill is that it expressly violates the provisions of the Enclosure Acts, which have been passed by this House, and which represent some of the very best work Parliament has ever done. What are the principles of those Acts? They are to be found in the Act of 1845, supplemented by the more important Act of 1876, and the whole of these Acts recognise most emphatically that the public have an interest in these common lands, apart from the interest of the owner of the soil and from the interest of the freeman. It is this public interest which the Enclosure Acts are intended to protect, and it is surely as important as, if not more important, than the interests of the owners of the soil and of the commoners. If this Bill is allowed to proceed the protection afforded by the Enclosure Acts will disappear, Parliament will be stultifying itself, and it will establish a dangerous precedent, of which other corporations will in future years seek to take advantage. What are the safeguards provided by the Enclosure Acts? In the first place there must be a local inquiry at which all individuals and all local bodies concerned have a right to be heard. The corporation tell us that they have the unanimous consent of the borough to their Bill, but that is not sufficient. They ought to have the assent of the whole neighbourhood as represented by the rural district councils, parish councils, and other local bodies. If this Bill is passed, the protection afforded by the local inquiry will be swept on one side. Then again, under the Enclosure Acts, the Board of Agriculture has to satisfy itself that the public interests are duly protected, and that the enclosure will not prejudicially affect the inhabitants of populous places near. The Board has to

make a report to Parliament on the subject, and that report has to be considered by the Standing Committee of Commons, which has been appointed for the very purpose of protecting the public interest. That safeguard will also disappear under this Bill. I hope that the House will stand by its own legislation, and will not allow again to crop up that dangerous system which prevailed prior to the passing of the Enclosure Acts, a system which led to grave scandals in the loss of public rights. I think it is fair to say that the corporation assert that had they proceeded by way of Provisional Order they could not have got all they want. They certainly would not, for I do not believe the Enclosure Commissioners would have agreed to give them power to utilise the whole of the 356 acres for building purposes. Had they applied for a Provisional Order there would have been a local inquiry, and the House would not have been legislating as it were in the dark as to the wishes of the local community. Why do the promoters fear the test of a local inquiry? I think it is pretty evident they know that their proposals would not survive such an inquiry. I have endeavoured to make it clear that the House is being asked to set a dangerous precedent in allowing the principle of the Enclosure Acts to be violated, and I hope we may be able to have a disinterested vote upon this matter, and to decide the question on its merits.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I think everybody will sympathise with the inhabitants of a land-locked town. It matters not whether the land around the town belongs to a large proprietor who wants to preserve the amenities of his estate, or whether it is common land; the effect is the same in each case—it cannot be built upon. As our sympathies, therefore, naturally go with the town of Huntingdon, the question resolves itself into one of degree. We of the Commons Preservation Society have approached the corporation in a very friendly way, and have asked them, not unreasonably, as I think, to limit their demand, and not to take the whole of these 356 acres, with the idea that their population will so increase as to necessitate the use of the land for the extension of the borough. Of course, I know how boroughs do increase

when the opportunity arises, and I remember watching with great interest, some years ago, the amazing growth and expansion of a town in the north of Spain when its walls and fortifications were removed. The change was immensely for the benefit of the people there, and undoubtedly, if a certain limited amount of freedom were granted to Huntingdon, equally beneficial results would follow. The letter in *The Times* which my hon. friend has quoted is a repetition of what members of the corporation told the Commons Preservation Society a fortnight or three weeks ago. They then said that the whole of the land could not be utilised for 200 years. In view of that, I do not think the House will listen to a demand from the representatives of 4,000 people to extinguish the public rights of recreation over this enormous area simply to provide for a possible expansion of the town 200 years hence. If the corporation can show to a Committee of the House to what extent they can, by any guess or by the wildest estimate, grow in fifty years, then the House ought to allow them to acquire so much to that extent. To my mind this Bill is very little short of flouting the decisions of this House, and I trust that if the House does give the Bill a Second Reading to-day, it will insist upon its being carefully studied in a Committee of the House, which is the recognised machinery for the protection of public rights. I beg to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'This House is not prepared to consider a proposal for the inclosure of common lands except when recommended by the Board of Agriculture, in accordance with the procedure and on the principles laid down by the Enclosure Acts.'"—(*Mr. Kearley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. SMITH-BARRY (Huntingdonshire, Huntingdon): One of the chief objections raised by the opponents of the Bill is that the Corporation of Huntingdon have not proceeded in what they say is the usual and regular manner. They say that the corporation should have proceeded by Provisional Order, which would have been preceded by a local inquiry, instead of coming here to-day with a

Sir John Brunner.

Private Bill to carry out their object. When the corporation decided that they would make this proposal, and that they would get rid, if possible, of those rights—for I may say here at once that there has been constant and perpetual litigation as regards the respective rights—the corporation felt it was important once for all that the question should be set at rest. The corporation doubted whether they should proceed by Bill or Provisional Order. They took counsel's opinion, and were advised that it would be impossible for them to proceed by Provisional Order, and that the only course was to proceed by Private Bill. They were advised, and so far as I have been able to make out they were well advised, that the only course open to them to take was that they have taken; but even if they had proceeded by Provisional Order they would, for the purpose of obtaining building powers over those lands, have been compelled to proceed by Bill afterwards, so that if the Second Reading of this Bill is passed now, it goes to a Committee upstairs, and the report of the Board of Agriculture will have to be laid before that Committee. So far as we can understand, this is only the proper and legal way in which we could have proceeded, and it is the simplest and best way in the public interest. If it had been possible to proceed by Provisional Order it would have been a very much cheaper and simpler form, and the Huntingdon Corporation would have been only too glad to adopt that form of procedure; but as it was there was nothing left open for them, as they were advised by competent legal advisers, except to proceed in the manner they are proceeding now. The opposition to this Bill is that of the Commons Preservation Society. I wish to speak with every respect of the Commons Preservation Society. They are an excellent body, and they have done a great deal of valuable work in the public interest. They are the watchful guardians of the public interest in regard to public enclosures, but they are apt, like a great many other good people, to go a little further than they are entitled to do, and they are inclined to think that instead of the commons being made for the public, the public are made for the commons. The public in this case are the people of Huntingdon, and I think they are practically unanimous in wishing

that the object of this Bill should be carried out. Conservatives and Radicals alike are of one mind, and only last week the Radical local paper had the strongest possible article hoping that this House would consider carefully the merits of this Bill and give it a Second Reading when it came before it. The people who are interested in it are thirty-three. They have in their handwriting agreed to the proposals made in the Bill. The incomes derived out of the rights over those commons are calculated at £17 each.

Under the provisions of the Bill they will get something like £22 each, and I really cannot see that that is too much compensation to give them for the rights which are being taken away. The corporation represents the public at large, and the corporation twice unanimously approved of the principle of the Bill. A public meeting of the inhabitants was held, and they also unanimously agreed to it. Hon. Members opposite say that the neighbourhood ought to give the sum. I scarcely know how the neighbourhood is to give the sum. What are the objects of the Bill? The objects of the Bill are that these common lands shall become the absolute property of the corporation, and that they should be empowered to let out small grants not exceeding three acres at a time for building purposes. The ground, as the hon. Member opposite has said, is small, and in a town of 4,316 inhabitants. It is surrounded by open country, with pleasant roads and footpaths going in every direction, and there is a large tract of 250 acres in extent which can never be built over. Therefore there is no question of the light or air of the people. On the contrary, the medical officer of the town itself says that the town is so congested that some of the houses are getting absolutely unhealthy, and that the town cannot increase on account of those commons, but must decrease because of the insanitary condition of houses which must be pulled down. Other houses holding a smaller number of people will have to be erected in their stead, so that unless some power is given to the corporation to build upon these open spaces it is absolutely impossible that the town can extend, and on the contrary, it will contract. Something has been said about the common lands being places of recreation. Now as regards certain portions of the lands no one has a right to go on

them at all. Under the Bill which is before the House the corporation will make a recreation ground of ten and a half acres of the land, but the size of it is a matter of detail. If the corporation acquire the rights they seek, the grounds will really become recreation grounds for the public, and it cannot be said they are that at present. I have been authorised by the corporation to say that whereas, of course, they must purchase the rights of the freemen over the whole of the land, as regards the commons, which extend to 146 acres, they are willing to have it provided in the Bill that no buildings should be put upon 82 of those acres. Of the remaining 64 acres they will make a recreation ground of 10½ acres, leaving only 53½ acres for building purposes. Any details as to allotments and so on could be considered by the Committee. After this large concession it would be a monstrous shame that the town should remain cribbed, cabined, and confined, and be strangled for want of building room. I earnestly hope that the House will allow the Bill to be read a second time, in order that it may be considered by a Committee upstairs.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) reminded the House that the Commons Act of 1876 provided that whenever an enclosure was proposed to be made the matter should be referred to a body now represented by the Board of Agriculture; that that body should hold a local inquiry; that the report of that inquiry should be embodied in the Provisional Order, and that that Provisional Order should go before the Standing Committee of the House. The inquiries of the Committee were always conducted with the greatest possible care; witnesses representing the neighbourhood were summoned, and every opportunity was given for local opinion to be expressed; and the decisions of that Committee were always acquiesced in with satisfaction. His great objection to the present Bill was that it proposed to set aside that procedure. The Bill was *prima facie* an Enclosure Bill, and as such should have gone before the Board of Agriculture, and followed the procedure laid down in the Act of 1876. The questions raised could not be properly dealt with by the House as a body; they should be dealt with by a selected body, and the House had provided that selected

body in its Standing Committee. It was now asked that that body should be thrown aside, and the Bill referred to an ordinary Private Bill Committee, which had not the wide power possessed by the Standing Committee, and was not nearly as competent to deal with the matter. The only excuse urged was that the Corporation of Huntingdon desired to get by this Bill something they could not have effected by Provisional Order. That might be a reason for taking some further steps, but it was not a reason for asking the House to do something which the Act of 1876 expressly declared should be done in another way. The hon. Member for Devonport was therefore justified in asking the House to sanction the resolution he had moved as an Amendment, and to adhere to the procedure laid down in the Act of 1876. The men who happened to be members of the corporation or freemen at any particular date were not necessarily the best judges of what would be for the permanent interest of the community. The House had to guard the interests of those yet unborn, and a special procedure had been laid down with the view of protecting the interests of those who were not necessarily properly represented by the corporation or any local authority. He hoped the House would not strike a great blow at a system which had worked well for twenty-four years, but would accede to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Devonport.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) asked how far the House was to proceed with the new system of opposing Private Bills on Second Reading. The practice, which was largely increasing, was a very dangerous one. It was perfectly true that some other procedure might have been adopted by the promoters of this Bill, but the best legal advice was taken and followed as to the course to be adopted. So far as the difficulties which had been raised with regard to commons, enclosures, and so on were concerned, it was enough for the House to understand that a report from the Board of Agriculture dealing with the whole of those technicalities and difficulties must be laid before the Committee upstairs. Surely that was sufficient guarantee that all legal obligations would be observed. There were no private interests concerned; and there was a unanimous population, supported by its local authority, making the

Mr. Bryce.

demand that the Bill should be considered by a Private Bill Committee. Considering the liberal manner in which the promoters had met the objectors to the Bill, it would be a cruel injustice to refuse to allow the Bill to be considered by a Committee, and he therefore hoped the Second Reading would be carried.

MR. HALDANE (Haddington): The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by saying that the habit had been growing in this House of imposing difficulties in the way of Private Bill legislation, and he went on to say that the Corporation of Huntingdon had a very great grievance in this matter which required our sympathy and attention. It may be that the case we have before us is one which the House ought to hear; but there is Private Bill legislation and Private Bill legislation. We are dealing here with a case not of an Imperial character, but one coming into a category with which the House is well accustomed to deal under a particular code. It is now nearly a century since the House laid down the principle that it would not sanction an Enclosure Act without good reason, and it laid down a code to which every Bill of this character should conform; and for the last twenty years no promoter has had the audacity to present a Bill to this House without making it conform to the code laid down in 1876. The right hon. Member for Huntingdon said there were legal difficulties in the way of adopting the usual code in this case. He did not say what they were, and I for one should like to know how far they prevented the usual course being taken. I can conceive that there might be some difficulty with respect to Lammas lands, but there can be none at all with regard to common lands, and I can conceive that it was possible in this case to have proceeded by way of Provisional Order. We feel that when these Bills come up we are not perfectly informed of the circumstances, and we are not in a position to judge the merits. Our only safety lies in conforming to procedure under which we know the Government Department is looking after the House and seeing that no injustice is being done. I desire to draw attention to the peculiar way in which this matter stands. The promoters have not approached the Minister of Agriculture and asked him either to allow their Bill to be

dealt with under the code of procedure laid down and send it to his Department, or, if they are to proceed by Private Bill procedure, to rise in his place and state the reason for that departure from our established rules. We have had no explanation as to why it is that the promoters of this Bill are allowed to proceed in this altogether exceptional form. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman, who I see is in his place, is going to give any explanation, but it would be very satisfactory if he would tell us why it is that this Bill is not going through the usual steps and stages, and I think it would be convenient if I now move the adjournment of this debate in order that we may hear the views of the Government upon the matter. I therefore beg to move that the debate on this Bill be now adjourned.

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to second the motion of my hon. and learned friend. I think this matter requires a little more investigation. The case is a very peculiar one. The Bill takes a very unusual course, and I think the House ought to postpone the question, and on future consideration it may throw out the Bill, as it makes a very large encroachment on the common rights of England.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That the debate be now adjourned."—
(*Mr. Haldane.*)

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): My hon. and learned friend opposite asks me to say what is the opinion of the Government upon this Bill, and I can state that in a very few words. I am asked why this Bill is to proceed in this manner instead of following the statute. That question can only be answered by the division now shortly to take place. Whether the promoters of the Bill have been right or wrong in the course of procedure which they have adopted is a matter with which my Department has nothing to do. My Department has the power to proceed on certain lines laid down by Parliament, and they are prepared to exercise those powers when applied to by a local authority. But there may be cases, and I am not prepared to say this is not one, where it may be desirable to proceed in the manner adopted by

the Corporation of Huntingdon, and it appears to me that it is for Parliament alone to say whether the circumstances are such as to justify a departure from the procedure which Parliament has laid down.

MR. BRYCE: Do you approve of it?

*MR. LONG: It is not for me to say whether I approve of it or not. The right hon. Gentleman opposite did not quite accurately describe the procedure. It is clear that the local authority would have to obtain a Provisional Order for the purposes of an enclosure first of all, and to follow that by a Private Bill for acquiring powers. But the Private Bill might be proceeded with *pari passu* with the Provisional Order. I am very reluctant, from the examination I have been able to make, to throw any opposition in the way of this Bill. I have investigated the facts, and I have reason to believe that there is great necessity for the extension of the borough of Huntingdon. The land in the south is not suitable because it is water-logged, and in the west there is land which ought not to be used for this purpose. The only other land which is suitable is this common land, which runs in the shape of a wedge from the north. On the other hand, I am bound to say that my hon. friend who supports this Bill and the Corporation of Huntingdon would have done better in their own interests if they had adopted the usual procedure, because, assuming that their case is so strong, the result would have been that the Board of Agriculture would have held a local inquiry, heard all the parties, and ascertained the facts of the case, and would have presented their report and shown their approval of the scheme by the issue of a Provisional Order giving the necessary powers, a course which would have strengthened the hands of the promoters of the Bill. The promoters having thought fit to take the course they have, it is entirely a matter for Parliament to say whether this is a case which has justified them in departing from the established rule.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Huntingdon if there is a petitioner against the Bill. If so, there will, of course, be an inquiry; if not there cannot by any possibility be one.

MR. SMITH-BARRY: I understand that there is a petitioner.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER: But if the petitioner for any reason whatever withdraws, the House will be absolutely helpless. There will be no machinery whatever for amending the Bill. Under these circumstances I am very sorry not to have obtained some pledge from the Government. I sincerely hope that if not to-day, at any rate in the future, they will be prepared to maintain the procedure laid down by the House and the Government in such cases.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): Would it not be possible for the promoters of the Bill to adopt this session the procedure of applying to the Board of Agriculture, and thus obtain a Provisional Order?

*MR. LONG: They could not now get a Provisional Order this session.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): Is it not the fact that under the

Provisional Order the Corporation of Huntingdon could not get building powers, and they must proceed by Bill for that?

*MR. LONG: Under the Enclosure Acts the Corporation of Huntingdon would apply to the Board of Agriculture for powers to enclose lands. The Provisional Orders giving such power could not apply to building powers, which would have to be obtained by Private Bills.

MR. HALDANE: As the right hon. Gentleman has made it perfectly clear that he does not approve of this departure from the usual course, and that it has not his sanction, I beg leave to withdraw my motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 143; Noes, 149. (Division List No. 64.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt Sir. Alex F.
Aird, John
Anstruther, H. T.
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baird, John George Alexander
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brown, Alexander H.
Bullard, Sir Harry
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Irwin E. Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles

Denny, Colonel
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fardell, Sir T. George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manc'r)
Finch, George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Garfit, William
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Godard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, R. Trotter
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Howari, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, Hon. James Henry C.
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick

Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Sw'nsea)
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maclean, James Mackenzie
Maclure, Sir John William
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Monk, Charles James
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropsh.)
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptf'd)
Mount, William George
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robt. Torrens
Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
Penn, John
Pierpoint, Robert
Plunkett, Rt. Hon. H. Curzon

Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Richards, Henry Charles
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rothschild, Hon. L. Walter
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Rutherford, John
Ryder, John Herbert Dudley

Savory, Sir Joseph
Seely, Charles Hilton
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sidebottom, T. H. (Stalybrdg.)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.

Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Tamt'n)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, J. Powell. (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Smith-Barry and Sir
William Hart Dyke.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N. E.)
Allhusen, Augustus H. Eden
Allison, Robert Andrew
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Balcarres, Lord
Billson, Alfred
Blake, Edward
Boulous, Edmund
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Chas. (Glasgow)
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Channing, Francis Allston
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colville, John
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donegan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Drage, Geoffrey
Duckworth, James
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Faber, George Denison
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Flower, Ernest
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis

Gold, Charles
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hn. C. Seale-
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez E.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, W. (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
Kilbride, Denis
Knowles, Lees
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Cumb'land)
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Macaleese, Daniel
McCræ, George
McEwan, William
McIver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
Maddison, Fred.
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milner, Sir Fred. George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Morgan, J. L. (Carmarthen)
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Malley, William

Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
Philipps, John Wynford
Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs. SW)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
Renshaw, Charles Hine
Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarsh.)
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Souttar, Robinson
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Stanley, Sir Henry M. (Lambeth)
Strachey, Edward
Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G. (Ox. Un.)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tollemache, Henry James
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene
Weir, James Galloway
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Woods, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Kearley and Mr.
Hobhouse.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and
agreed to.

Resolved, That this House is not pre-
pared to consider a proposal for the
enclosure of common lands except when
recommended by the Board of Agriculture,

in accordance with the procedure and on the principles laid down by the Enclosure Acts.

**EAST LONDON WATER BILL
(BY ORDER).**

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I do not rise to make any motion on this Bill, but I should like to put two questions to the President of the Local Government Board on points affecting this and the Lambeth Water Bill. The Royal Commission which has recently sat reported in favour of the purchase of water undertakings by some public authority. There is a clear and unanimous decision on that point. It has also reported in connection with the East London District that a public authority could deal with the future supply for that district better and more cheaply than the East London Water Company itself. I am quite prepared to leave these questions for the decision of the Committee, for I think it reasonable they should have these matters placed before them. But I observe that in the Act passed by the Government inter-connecting the water supply of the companies, a clause has been introduced which bars the companies from bringing forward that Act as a “valuable asset” in case of purchase. I should like to hear the opinion of the President of the Local Government Board with reference to this clause in connection with the present Bill. The other question more particularly affects the Lambeth Bill. In proposing purchase the Royal Commission has taken into account the existence of the sinking fund as part of their financial estimate. The importance of this question may be gauged by the fact that ultimately this sinking fund will amount to £150,000 a year. It is therefore necessary to safeguard the existence of this fund, but nothing is done in that direction in this Bill. I think, however, we may safely leave that to the Committee. I should like to know whether the Government intended to support intact the principle of the sinking fund in this Bill as well as in the case of the Lambeth Water Bill.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The hon. Mem-

ber has addressed to me one or two questions in connection with the Bill before the House, but my reply to them cannot be altogether confined to that measure, and if, therefore, I appear somewhat out of order in any of the observations I may make, I hope the House will grant me its indulgence. The Bill we are now discussing is one for increasing the storage of water to meet the wants of the water consumers of London, and upon that ground alone, if upon no other, I should feel it my duty, as representing the Local Government Board, to support the Second Reading of the Bill. With regard to the first of the other matters raised by the hon. Member—the inter-connection between the water companies of London—I may say that the Government Act applies both to this Bill and to the Bill promoted by Lambeth, which we are to consider later on. Then the hon. Member referred to the question of the sinking fund. That does not apply to the East London Bill, because there is a clause in that Bill at the present moment providing for a sinking fund. But it does apply to the Bill of the Lambeth Company. That is my answer to the two questions of the hon. Member. I can only add that personally I think there is a great deal to be said for both of the propositions dealt with in the hon. Member's questions, and I am also of opinion that they are matters which ought to be referred to and dealt with by a Select Committee. I do not think I need say anything more. Indeed, the hon. Member must be aware that if the Committee does not deal with these matters in the way he desires there will be another opportunity upon which he can take the opinion of the House in regard to them.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

LAMBETH WATER BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

**METROPOLITAN COMMON SCHEME
(PETERSHAM) PROVISIONAL ORDER.**

Bill to confirm a Scheme relating to Petersham Common, in the parish of Petersham and borough of Richmond, in the county of Surrey, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Hanbury.

**METROPOLITAN COMMON SCHEME
(PETERSHAM) PROVISIONAL ORDER
BILL.**

"To confirm a Scheme relating to Petersham Common, in the parish of Petersham and borough of Richmond, in the county of Surrey," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 122.]

**PLYMOUTH, STONEHOUSE, AND
DEVONPORT TRAMWAYS BILL.**

"To confer further powers upon the Plymouth, Stonehouse, and Devonport Tramways Company; to amend the Acts relating to that company; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

BRIGHTON CORPORATION BILL.

Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Brighton Corporation (Water) Bill, in the Session of 1896, be referred to the Committee on the Brighton Corporation Bill.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Committee:—

1. That, in the case of the Barnsley Corporation Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that Clauses 17-47, relating to Tramways, be struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

2. "That, in the case of the Bray and Enniskerry Railway Bill, Petition of the 'Wicklow County Council' for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of their Petition against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the London and South-Western Railway Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision, if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

4. "That, in the case of the St. David's Railway (Abandonment) Petition, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed

with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolutions agreed to.

STANDING ORDERS.

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Select Committee on Standing Orders, That they had agreed to the following Resolution:—

"That, in the case of the Special Report of the Examiner on the Great Grimsby Street Tramways Bill [Lords], referred to them by Order of the House of the 26th February, 1900, they are of opinion that the Standing Orders have been complied with."

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to explain, vary, or alter the Deed of Settlement of the Universal Life Assurance Society; and for other purposes." Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords].

And, also a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society and the directors thereof; to amend the Acts relating to the Society; and for other purposes." Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords].

**UNIVERSAL LIFE ASSURANCE
SOCIETY BILL [Lords].**

**SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND AND LIFE
ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [Lords].**

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

**ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS
(SCOTLAND) BILL.**

Petitions against, from Aberdeen; and Kirkcaldy; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY (EXEMPTION FROM RATES).

Petition from Poplar, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Dundee, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions, in favour; from Great Crosby; Llandaff; and Dinas Powis; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Dundee, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Garforth; Shireoaks; Halton; Micklefield; and Bowers; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition in favour, from Hertford; and Leeds; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Great Dalby; Pollokshaws (two); Sunday School Union; Birmingham; Glasgow; and Dundee; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Streatham Hill, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL AND SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Newton Abbot; Ashburton; and Teignmouth; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Uxbridge; Norwich; Ryde; Heanor; Bath; Rushden; John Duncan; Walkley; Kettering; London (three); Marlpool; Langley; Malton; Hertfordshire; Darlington; Fulham (two); Deptford; Strand; Stratford; West London; Kennington; Clacton-on-Sea; Colchester; Sheffield; Langley Mill; Kilburn; Ossett; Morley; Abergavenny; Cwmbran (two); Gloucester; Llanhilleth (two); Woodford Green; Oldham; Lightcliffe; Darwen (two); Hyde; Risca; Edinburgh; Upper Cwmbran; Llanvrechva Upper; Silvertown; Canning Town; Plaistow; Bedwellty; Darlington; Abercarn (two); Limehouse; South Monmouth; New-

bridge; Rogerstone; Crosskeys; Penmain; and Abersychan; to lie upon the Table.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Nairn; and Newport; to lie upon the Table.

WATER SUPPLY (METROPOLIS) (RECOMMENDATIONS OF ROYAL COMMISSION).

Petition from West Ham, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

Return [presented 12th March] to be printed. [No. 94.]

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHES).

Copy presented, of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of each of the undermentioned Metropolitan Boroughs, and incorporating the Council thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith:—Battersea, Bermondsey, Bethnal Green, Deptford, Fulham, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith, Hampstead, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Poplar, St. Marylebone, Shoreditch, Southwark, Stoke Newington, Wandsworth, and Woolwich [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FINANCE ACT, 1894.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, date 24th October, 1899, appointing a Committee to examine into the operation of Section 4 of the Finance Act, 1894, and other matters, and of the Report of the Committee dated February, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AFRICA (No. 2, 1900).

Copy presented, of Correspondence with the Presidents of the South African Republic and of the Orange Free State respecting the war [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TAXES AND IMPOSTS.

Return ordered, "Showing (1) the Rates of Duties, Taxes, or Imposts collected by Imperial Officers; (2) the Quantities or Amounts taxed; (3) the

Gross Receipts derived from each Duty ; and (4) the net Receipts and Appropriation thereof in the year ending the 31st day of March, 1900 ; and (1) the aggregate Gross Receipts derived from all such Duties, Taxes, or Imposts under the principal heads of revenue ; (2) the aggregate net Receipts ; (3) the Charges of Collection ; and (4) the Produce, after deducting these Charges, in each of the ten years ending the 31st day of March, 1900."

"And, Notes to show any changes in the Taxes, Duties, and Imposts consequent upon the acceptance of the Budget Proposals of 1900 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 321, of Session 1899)."—(*Mr. Goddard.*)

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure:—Sir Charles Dilke; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Lloyd-George.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee, That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, the following Fifteen Members in respect of the Midwives Bill:—Dr. Ambrose, Mr. Bonsor, Mr. Flower, Mr. Vicary Gibbs, Mr. Hazell, Mr. Howard, Mr. Humphreys-Owen, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Sir Powlett Milbank, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Sir George Pilkington, Mr. Schwann, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Thornton, and Mr. Tritton.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Mr. Lloyd-George; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Charles Dilke.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR reported from the Chairmen's Panel, That they had appointed Mr. Laurence Hardy to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law

and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure.

Report to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—OVERTURES BY THE REPUBLICS FOR PEACE.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): In putting to the First Lord of the Treasury the question on the paper, namely, on what day the House may expect to receive the Papers promised in relation to the proposals of Presidents Kruger and Steyn asking for conditions of peace; and whether the Papers will be restricted to those communications and the replies of Her Majesty's Government, or will include other correspondence and documents of later date than the last South African Blue-book, I should like to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is able to make to the House the communication which I understand has been made in another place.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I understand that the correspondence, which will be immediately laid, has been read publicly to the House of Lords this afternoon by the Prime Minister. If the House desires it I will read it here.

[Mr. BALFOUR then read the telegrams which appear on page 700 of this volume.]

STORMBERG AND MAGERSFONTEIN ENGAGEMENTS — OFFICIAL DESPATCHES.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can lay the despatches on the action at Magersfontein upon the Table.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg at the same time to ask the Secretary of State for War when he will communicate to the public the despatches of Sir W. Gatacre dealing with the reverse of Stormberg, and those of Lord Methuen dealing with Magersfontein, fought 10th and 11th December, three months since.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.) (for Mr. WYNDHAM): In reply to these two ques-

tions, the despatches referred to are now being printed, and will shortly be gazetted.

ALLEGED OFFER OF SURRENDER BY 3,000 BOERS.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he has any information to the effect that a commando of 3,000 Boers offered to surrender on terms to Lord Roberts, but that their offer was rejected because the conditions were impossible; and whether he can inform the House what those conditions were.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Nothing is known at the War Office of this matter.

WIRE-CUTTERS.

MR. NUSSEY (Pontefract): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he is in a position to make any further statement as to how many additional wire-cutters have been sent to the army in South Africa since 1st February.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): One thousand six hundred and eighty wire-cutters have been sent out since 1st February, in addition to those which have gone out with units.

LONDON SCOTTISH VOLUNTEER CORPS' ACCOUNTS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is the practice of Volunteer corps to make out a statement of accounts annually and to issue a balance sheet to members; and, if so, will he explain why the London Scottish Volunteer corps has failed to issue a balance sheet for many years.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): A Volunteer corps is required to render to the War Office an annual account of its public funds and to exhibit a copy in the orderly room. The communication to the members of any statement of accounts of the private funds of the corps is not a matter within the jurisdiction of the War Office.

LEE-ENFIELD RIFLES.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will state the result of the inquiries which have been instituted into the inaccurate sighting

of the Lee-Enfield rifles which were issued to the troops in the early part of the year; and will he say what steps have been taken to ensure satisfactory tests and prevent faulty rifles being again issued, and what officers are now responsible for the testing.

*MR. J. POWELL WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The question has been referred to an expert committee. The officers of the inspection branch of the Army Ordnance Department carry out the testing.

VOLUNTEER MOUNTED INFANTRY—CAPITATION GRANT.

MR. MCCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when the War Office will be able to announce the amount of the capitation grant to be given to Volunteer mounted infantry companies; whether permission will be given for companies of, say, fifty strong going into camp and receiving free transport and daily ration allowances; and whether such permission would preclude the mounted infantry attending their brigade or regimental camps in the same year.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: This matter was dealt with in the statement of my hon. friend the Under Secretary of State last night. I am not yet able to announce the amount of the capitation grant which will be given in the few cases in which Volunteer corps will be allowed to form mounted companies.

MR. MCCRAE: Will the hon. Gentleman answer the last part of the question?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: That is one of the conditions not at present settled. I cannot answer the question more fully.

REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR RECRUITING.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when the report of the Inspector General for Recruiting will be issued.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The report will be issued very shortly.

VACCINATION IN THE ARMY—CASE OF JOSEPH DONOVAN, KING'S OWN YORKSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary

of State for War whether his attention has been called to the death of Joseph Donqvan, a private in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, who, according to the findings of a coroner's inquest at Derby on 3rd March, died on 11th February from pneumonia, secondary to pemphigus following vaccination; whether, in view of the fact that another soldier at Pontefract suffered during the same month from this rare disease supervening on vaccination, he will cause a strict investigation to be made into the source of the lymph used, in accordance with the recommendation of the jury; and whether he will advise that compensation be paid to the deceased's widowed mother on account of the loss of her son.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS (for Mr. WYNDHAM): Yes, Sir. There were three cases in all, two of which proved fatal. A careful inquiry is being made into these cases. The lymph used was from three different calves, and from these same calves lymph was used in the vaccination of over 16,000 cases without any other unfavourable reports. No award from Army funds can be granted as compensation; but if the man's mother was dependent on him for support, the Patriotic Fund will be able to help her.

ESTIMATED MILITARY AND NAVAL EXPENDITURE FOR 1900.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is now the estimate of expenditure in the present financial year, and what the estimate for the next financial year, of the expenditure on capital account by the Admiralty and the War Office under the Naval Works Acts, the Military Works Acts, or otherwise, in addition to any sums repaid by annuities charged on Estimates.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The estimate of expenditure, exclusive of annuities charged on Estimates, is as follows:—

	Present Financial Year.	Next Financial Year.
Naval Works Acts ...	£1,460,479	£2,541,521
Barracks Act, 1890 ...	186,000	76,500
Military Works Acts	866,000	1,085,000

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[FOURTH SERIES.]

POLITICAL PENSIONS.

MR. BAYLEY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state how many political pensions of £2,000 a year, £1,200 a year, and £800 a year, respectively, have been granted for life under the 32 and 33 Vic., c. 60, and the 4 and 5 Will. IV., c. 24, to persons still living; whether he will give the names of the present pensioners, and the date of the grant of their pensions; and whether, having regard to the terms of the statute under which these pensions are granted, it is the practice of the Treasury to require a pensioner to renounce his pension when his income from private or official sources ceases to be inadequate to maintain his station in life.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. Member will find all the particulars he desires in the Return presented to the House on June 13, 1898, No. 235 of 1898, and in the last Finance Accounts, Paper No. 258 of last session. It has been the practice for the last fifteen years to require the recipient of a political pension to give an undertaking that if subsequent to the grant of the pension he receives an accession of fortune he should resign his pension.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): May I ask why the name of Lord Cros appears as the recipient of a pension, seeing that he continues to hold office?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: For the obvious reason that it is an office without pay.

SOLDIERS' ESTATES AND THE DEATH DUTIES.

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is the intention of the Board of Inland Revenue to exclude from the exemption from estate duty, conferred under Section 8 (1) of the Finance Act, 1894, estates of non-commissioned officers above the rank of corporal, dying in Her Majesty's service during the present war; and, if so, is such exclusion in accordance with any legal decision; and what is the ground for making a distinction between one kind of non-commissioned officer and

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH:
(1) of the Finance Act
applicable to estate duty

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law and practice" with respect to "the exemption of the property of common seamen, marines, or soldiers who are slain or die in the service of Her Majesty." The practice in the past, dating from the beginning of the century, has been to exclude from such exemption the property of non-commissioned officers in the Army above the rank of corporal, and the Act of 1894 confers no power to alter the practice.

ADMIRALTY CONTRACTS—SHIP-BUILDING.

MR. H. S. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether firms tendering for the construction of battleships and cruisers have had their tenders accepted by the Admiralty on condition that they extended the required period for construction.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I need scarcely say that the whole policy of the Board of Admiralty is in exactly the opposite direction to the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman's question. We have, of course, been anxious for the quickest possible construction of ships. I have puzzled over the possible genesis of the delusion that we accepted tenders on condition that firms extended the period required for construction, and the only thing that I have been able to hunt up which could be twisted into supporting it has been the circumstance that one firm offered on one occasion earlier delivery of a cruiser than the contract date in the form of tender, if we could guarantee the earlier delivery of armour than stated in the invitation to tender. This guarantee we were unable to give. At the same time we informed the firm that any earlier delivery of the vessel they might find it possible to realise would be fully appreciated by the Board.

PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD LABOURERS—BACK PAY.

SIR JOHN BAKER (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty when the whole of the men entitled to back payment in Portsmouth Dockyard will be paid, consequent upon an order of the Admiralty, dated 10th August, 1899, which directed that the new scheme for payment of skilled labourers was to

date as from 1st July, and not deferred till 1st November, and, if payment is deferred beyond the present financial year, will the men be deprived of their back pay.

MR. GOSCHEN: The men will in no case be deprived of the back pay to which they may be found to be entitled under the order in question.

INDIAN SIEGE BATTERIES.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether it is proposed to horse the 5·4 howitzer siege batteries now in India; and whether these siege guns are taken on manœuvres and to camps of exercises, and in what way they differ essentially from the 5-inch howitzer, which is not a siege gun.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): It is proposed to substitute horses for elephants and bullocks in the equipment of 5·4-inch howitzer batteries in India. These howitzers are taken to manœuvres and camps of exercise. They differ from the 5-inch howitzer in throwing a 60lb. instead of a 50lb. shell, while their total weight behind team is about 6 cwt. greater.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Indian War Department continue to insist upon the manufacture of a 5·4 howitzer, carrying a 60lb. projectile, in view of the fact that there is no other gun of this calibre in Her Majesty's service by sea or land; and that the guns adopted by the War Office for service out of India are a 5-inch gun with a 50lb. projectile, and a 6-inch gun with 100lb. projectile; and will he explain what public advantage attaches to the retention of this weapon.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I cannot say whether the manufacture of the 5·4 inch howitzer will be continued. It is not intended that more than two heavy batteries in India shall be armed with this weapon, and there are already in India a sufficient number of these howitzers for that purpose. I fully recognise the importance of securing uniformity of pattern between the Indian and home services; but as has been stated more than once in this House, there were

special grounds for the introduction of this particular howitzer. It has, according to the latest official report from India, proved itself a simple and powerful weapon, calculated to form a valuable addition to a field army; and its withdrawal from service would involve a serious sacrifice of public money.

CHIEF PRESIDENCY MAGISTRATE OF MADRAS.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen-shire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, when the post of Chief Presidency Magistrate of Madras recently became vacant, it was given to an officer of the Madras police who had no judicial experience; whether similar posts in Bombay and Calcutta are always filled by lawyers of experience; and whether Mr. W. E. Clarke had invariably acted as Chief Presidency Magistrate of Madras whenever a temporary vacancy occurred within the last few years; whether he was so acting within a short time of the last vacancy occurring; and whether, in the event of any such vacancy occurring in future in Madras, he will adopt the same course as that followed in filling the similar posts in Bombay and Calcutta.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have no knowledge of the appointment referred to in the hon. Member's question. The power to make it rests entirely with the Government of Madras, and I am not aware of any sufficient reason for interfering with their discretion and responsibility in the matter. I believe that in Madras there are recent precedents for appointing to this post officers whose experience has been confined to police business, and that the results have been quite satisfactory.

PACIFIC CABLE SCHEME — CONCESSIONS TO THE EASTERN TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the rights now on the point of being ceded to the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company by the Australian Governments materially alter and affect the conditions upon which the Pacific Cable scheme, to which these Governments are signatories, has been based; and that the Canadian Government regard these concessions as likely to defeat and probably

to lead to the abandonment of the enterprise; and whether Her Majesty's Government have intimated their acquiescence to the grant of these concessions; and, if not, whether they have addressed any remonstrances to the Australian Governments with the object of inducing them to renounce their intention of infringing the terms of the Pacific Cable scheme.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The question how the proposed concession to the Eastern Extension Company of the right to open its own offices in the Australian capitals when the Pacific Cable has been laid will affect that scheme has been referred to the Pacific Cable Committee for consideration and report. The hon. Member will see from the correspondence recently laid before the House that Her Majesty's Government have stated that the question of these concessions is one for the Colonial Governments concerned, but they have asked the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria to defer concluding any agreement with the company until the Cable Committee has reported on the question.

BRITISH HONDURAS RAILWAY.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the draft agreement and specification for the construction of the British Honduras Railway which was being drawn up in January is ready, or whether there is likely to be further delay.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The draft is in print, and will be ready very shortly.

CORPORATION AND DISTRICT COUNCIL STOCKS.

MR. NUSSEY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware of the difference which exists between the stocks of corporations and those of district councils—the former where the population is over 50,000 being trust securities; whereas the latter, whatever the population or the rateable value, are not; and whether he will consider the advisability of bringing in a Bill to remove this difference.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am in communication with the Lord Chancellor on the subject of amending the law re-

lating to trust investments, and will bear in mind the stocks of district councils, the position of which has already been brought to my attention.

DELAGOA BAY ARBITRATION.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the remuneration to the jurists on the Delagoa Bay Arbitration amounts to £5,000 a year; whether they have been sitting for about nine years; and whether, in answer to questions put to Ministers in 1894, 1896, and 1898* by the hon. Member for Canterbury, it was stated that there was good reason for believing that the award would not be much longer delayed, or that the final award was expected in the autumn of 1898; and whether the information to this effect given in the House of Commons on the 28th March, 1898, to the hon. Member for Canterbury, was supplied to Her Majesty's Government by the President of the Berne Tribunal.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): No sum has been named for the remuneration of the arbitrators. The answer to the second paragraph is in the affirmative. Her Majesty's Minister has not been in communication with the President of the Berne Tribunal. The information given to the House was obtained from other sources.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ABROAD.

MR. ARTHUR MOORE (London-derry): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can now state when the Papers relative to university education abroad will be laid upon the Table; and if he will endeavour to produce them before the debate on the Irish University question.

MR. BRODRICK: These Papers will be distributed at the end of the present week.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE REGULATIONS.

MR. SOAMES (Norfolk, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture

what period has elapsed since the last outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the county of Norfolk; and whether he can now withdraw all restrictions from the petty sessional districts of Diss, Earsham, Swainsthorpe, and Loddon and Clavering, or from any of those districts.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): The last outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Norfolk was discovered by one of our inspectors on the 20th February. By an order issued yesterday, which is to come into operation to-morrow, the restrictions have been withdrawn from the petty sessional divisions of Diss and Earsham, and they have been somewhat modified in Swainsthorpe and Loddon and Clavering, with a view to meet the more urgent necessities of the stock owners concerned.

MR. H. S. FOSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that the outbreak of foot and mouth disease took place at Fritton, in a place locally called the Island, naturally isolated by the sea, Lake Lothing, the River Waveney, and Breydon Water, with a tract of marshes following the course of the river with a width of from one to four miles, and at this time of the year entirely bare of stock; whether he can see his way to open for the sale of all stock, under a declaration and licence, all Suffolk south of the Waveney; and, in any case, whether he is now able to considerably reduce the scheduled area, having regard to the consequences to the farmers of any continued prolongation of the present restrictions. I beg also to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware of the loss which is being inflicted upon farmers, graziers, and other agriculturists by the restrictions imposed by his Department in Norfolk and Suffolk in connection with the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in North Suffolk some time ago, and particularly by the wide area over which these restrictions prevail, extending for thirty miles and upwards from the infected area; whether the time has now arrived for largely modifying these restrictions; and, in particular, whether he will consider the advisability of limiting the infected area to five miles from the point where the outbreak occurred, and of authorising holders of stock in the

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* (Fourth Series), 5th April, 1894, Vol. xxii., page 1451; 21st February, 1896, Vol. xxxvii., page 824; 28th March, 1898, Vol. lv., page 1066.

scheduled area but outside the infected area to send their cattle to markets such as Ipswich, Colchester, or London, the cattle being marked with the broad arrow and slaughtered within four days.

*MR. LONG : In reply to my hon. friend, I would say that it is the case that an outbreak of foot and mouth disease occurred at Fritton, the geographical features of which are doubtless correctly described in the question ; but my hon. friend will remember that five other outbreaks have since occurred in other parts of the scheduled district, and one in Bedfordshire. By an Order to come into operation to-morrow, the petty sessional divisions of Beccles and Bungay, with the borough of Bungay, have been withdrawn from the scheduled district, and the restrictions have been somewhat modified in that portion of Suffolk still included therein. At the moment no further relief can be afforded with safety.

ETON UNION WORKHOUSE— FATALITY TO A CHILD.

SIR JOSEPH SAVORY (Westmoreland, Appleby) : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been called to the case of a child, aged three years, who was scalded to death in the Eton Union Workhouse, on 18th February, through being placed in a bath of boiling water by a girl, aged fifteen years, who herself had been a pauper inmate of the union for five weeks, and was the only attendant in charge ; and what steps it is proposed to take to prevent a recurrence of such a fatality.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford) : My attention has been called to the unfortunate case referred to, and at my request the medical officer has made a report on the subject. I am in communication with the guardians with regard to the matter, and especially as to the steps to be taken to prevent any similar occurrence in future.

FRASERBURGH AND ST. COMBS LIGHT RAILWAY.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in the case of the Light Railway Order for the Fraserburgh and St. Combs Railway, the Great North

of Scotland Company has made application for the Treasury grant for the scheme ; and whether he will be able to take steps to urge on the commencement of the undertaking, which has been long delayed.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. RITCHIE, Croydon) : I understand that the answer to the first paragraph is in the negative. The Board of Trade will communicate with the company and endeavour to ascertain their intentions.

SMALL HOLDINGS IN ROSS-SHIRE.

MR. WEIR : I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether any scheme is yet in progress for the purpose of providing small holdings on the mainland of Ross-shire suitable for occupation by cottars and others who may be prepared to migrate from congested districts ; and, if not, will he say whether any efforts have been made to acquire land, and the cause of the delay in the preparation of a suitable scheme.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire) : No scheme is yet in progress on the mainland of Ross, and it is impossible within the scope of an answer to a question to deal adequately with all the considerations involved ; but they will be referred to in the second report of the Congested Districts Board which the Secretary for Scotland hopes will be in the hands of Members next month.

LIGHTHOUSES ON THE SCOTTISH COAST.

MR. WEIR : I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, in view of a statement contained in the Appropriation Accounts, 1898-9, under Class 7, Vote 3, to the effect that the account of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Fund includes a charge of £403 13s. 2d. for the erection of minor lighthouses erected on the coasts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, will he state the names of these lighthouses, and where they are respectively situated.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY : If the hon. Member will refer again to the Appropriation Accounts 1898-9 from which he quotes, he will find that the sum he mentions was not expended for the erection, but for the maintenance of minor

lighthouses, as explained in paragraph 4 of the Controller and Auditor General's Report attached thereto. The names of the lighthouses so maintained are given at page 10 of the Appendix to the first Report of the Congested Districts Board.

SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD EXPENDITURE.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, in view of the fact that the sum of £2,114 12s. 4d. was spent by the Congested Districts Board for Scotland during the year ended 31st March, 1899, in administering an expenditure of £8,973 17s. 8d., will he state what steps the Secretary for Scotland proposes to take in order to prevent one year's administrative charges of the Board amounting to as much as 25 per cent. of the total amount expended.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: It is obvious that the figures for the first full year of the administration of the Board in which the working staff had to be organised and in which the various schemes of expenditure had necessarily not advanced to maturity, cannot form a normal standard of comparison; and the percentages given in the hon. Member's question are in the circumstances meaningless figures. I may add that the Secretary for Scotland considers that the Board has, up to the present time, been very economically administered, and that a curtailment of its expenses would interfere with the proper execution of its important duties.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, having regard to the fact that free postage has now been granted to the head office of the Fishery Board, will he consider the expediency of communicating with the Postmaster General with a view to a similar concession being secured for the Congested Districts Board for Scotland.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that the question of free postage was considered by them; but, as Section 8 (2) of the Act of 1897 makes the administrative expenses of the Board payable from the sums voted by Parliament, it was decided by the Treasury that postage must be paid and charged against the Vote.

PUBLIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any licences to form public telephone exchanges under the Act of last session have been applied for to the Post Office; if so, how many; and how many such licences have been granted; how many of them have been granted to public corporations, and how many to incorporated companies; how many licences are in force in opposition to the existing licences held by the National Telephone Company; and in what districts are such competing licences operating.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HANBURY, Preston): Three actual applications for licences for telephone business have been made by local authorities. In one case a licence has been granted—namely, to the Corporation of Glasgow, for an area co-extensive with the Glasgow area of the National Telephone Company. The Postmaster General has also been in correspondence with twenty-two other local authorities, who are considering whether they shall apply for licences. Two applications for licences have been made by companies. A licence has been granted to the Mutual Telephone Company of Manchester for the borough of Salford and certain adjacent urban districts. The other application has been referred for approval to the corporation concerned, in accordance with Section 3 of the Telegraph Act, 1899. There is, of course, a telephone system worked by the local authority in the island of Guernsey.

POSTMEN'S PENSIONS—CASE OF R. PRIDDLE.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he will inquire into the case of R. Priddle, postman, S.E.D.O., who applied for a pension on 9th November, 1899, having met with an accident when on duty in April of the same year, after over twenty-eight years service, and who has been left without pay, half-pay, or pension since the above-mentioned date; and whether he can state the cause of the delay in this and similar cases, which presses upon those in the postal service who become incapacitated.

MR. HANBURY: A statement of Priddle's service was submitted to the Treasury with the view to the award of a pension on the 7th inst., and the award when made would, in the ordinary course, take effect from the date of the cessation of his pay—that is to say, from the 9th November last. The unusual delay which took place in this case is regretted, and was due to the numerous inquiries which it was found necessary to make before the statement of the man's service could be put forward. An advance has been made to him pending an award of pension.

FLOGGING IN PRISONS.

***MR. LLOYD MORGAN:** I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there are any cases within the last five years where prisoners have been sentenced to be flogged, and where the Home Secretary has either remitted the flogging or ordered a reduction of the number of lashes; and, if so, whether he will state the number of such cases.

***THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool):** There was no interference with any of the sentences of flogging in the years 1895, 1896, and 1898, except that in the latter year there was one remission on medical grounds. In 1897 one such sentence was remitted. In 1899 two sentences were remitted altogether; in two other cases where the sentence ordered a second flogging the second flogging was remitted, and in another case where it ordered a third flogging the third flogging was remitted.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN: Were all the remissions of punishment on the ground of ill-health?

***SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY:** No, Sir.

LADYSMITH REJOICINGS AT CAMBRIDGE.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the conviction of certain undergraduates of the University of Cambridge by the local magistrates for the offence of burning some pro-

perty on the night of the national celebration of the relief of Ladysmith; and whether, as the effect of this conviction is to incapacitate these undergraduates from entering any of the learned professions, he will consider whether a free pardon might be granted to these young offenders.

***SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY:** My attention has been called to this case, and I am at present making inquiry into it. I cannot answer the question to-day, but I may remind my hon. and gallant friend that the offence of which these undergraduates were convicted was not wilful damage, but larceny.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST FIRE IN NATIONAL MUSEUMS.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, in view of the value of the works of art which will be stored in the national museums shortly to be built, every effort will be made to reduce the danger of fire; and whether all the casings and wood fittings will be made of the non-inflammable wood now specified for all the wood fittings in ships of war.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Every effort will be made to reduce the danger of fire in the new buildings about to be erected at South Kensington. The wood fittings and casings in those buildings will be reduced to a minimum; and the architects have been instructed to consider the desirability of applying the non-inflammable process to those fittings.

SALE OF DRINK AT THE HOUSE.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Hammersmith whether the Kitchen Committee are still carrying on the sale of drink in the House and its precincts, in the same way as it was carried on when the Attorney General gave his opinion in the House of Commons that such sale was illegal.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith): The Kitchen Committee sell drink in the precincts of the House of Commons. As regards the second part of the question, I do not know.

MARLBOROUGH STREET TRAINING COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire, Rhondda): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether four teachers were recently rusticated from the Marlborough Street Training College, Dublin; what were the grounds of complaint against them; were these complaints investigated by the Board or by the college authorities, and were the teachers in question given any opportunity of meeting the charges made against them or being heard in their own defence; and if he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the report on which the Commissioners acted.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): Four Queen's Scholars were sent home from the training college in February last, owing to frequent absences from duty through ill-health. This was the only ground of complaint against them. The absences were reported by the principals of the college, and the cause of the absence was certified in each case by the medical officer. The duration of the absence was considered to preclude their proper completion of the current training course, but they may be admitted to a succeeding one. The matter is not of sufficient importance to justify the laying of the report in question on the Table of the House, as suggested.

MURDER OF HUGH THOMPSON, IN FERMANAGH.

MR. ARCHDALE (Fermanagh, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether any particulars are to hand as to the murder last week in Fermanagh of a man named Hugh Thompson; and whether Gilmartin, the man whose hay had been burned and on whose behalf Thompson was to give evidence, had been denounced at meetings in Belcoo of the United Irish League for taking an evicted farm.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is the United Irish League to be made responsible for every crime committed in Ireland?

MR. ATKINSON: A man named Gilmartin, in May last, took a farm from which the previous tenant had been evicted. A meeting was held in June,

under the auspices of the United Irish League, close to the evicted farm, at which Gilmartin was denounced by reference, though not by name, and it was suggested by several of the speakers that he should be boycotted. He was subsequently rigorously boycotted. His hay having been burnt in October, he claimed compensation for malicious injury. This claim was to have been heard at the assizes at Enniskillen. Thompson, the murdered man, was a friend of Gilmartin, and, although of a different religion, supported him, and aided him in resisting the boycott, and was about to be examined as a witness to sustain Gilmartin's claim. Three men have been arrested charged with the crime, the motive and cause of which will be investigated at the trial. At this stage I do not think it proper to express any opinion on the subject.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Can the Attorney General say why Irish transgressions are so eagerly advertised by Ulster Members?

[No answer was given.]

LOAN FUND BANKS.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland if he could see his way to add to his Loan Fund Bill a clause to provide a compassionate grant to save debenture holders from losing money which in good faith they invested in loan fund banks.

MR. ATKINSON: The suggestion of the hon. Member cannot be adopted, for reasons that I hope to state on the Second Reading of the Bill.

RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH—DISTURBANCES DIRECTED AGAINST OPPONENTS OF THE WAR.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a question of which I have given him private notice. It is whether, in view of the numerous recent instances of violent disturbances connected with peaceable meetings called for the discussion of South African affairs, or directed against the personal property of individuals, owing to their supposed opinions upon the present war, Her Majesty's Government will cause inquiry to be made, how far and by whom those disturbances were organised, and will consider what steps are necessary to

prevent a repetition of these discreditable occurrences, and to punish the offenders.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I received the right hon. Gentleman's notice not very long ago. I shall consult with my right hon. friend the Home Secretary upon the subject, and if the right hon. Gentleman will put the question on Thursday, either to me or to the Home Secretary, we will endeavour to reply to it.

NEW BILLS.

COLONIAL SOLICITORS.

Bill to provide for the admission of Solicitors of Courts of British Possessions to the Supreme Courts in the United Kingdom, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hedderwick, Sir James Woodhouse, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Warr, Mr. Helder, Mr. Lloyd-George, and Mr. Schwann.

COLONIAL SOLICITORS BILL.

"To provide for the admission of Solicitors of Courts of British Possessions to the Supreme Courts in the United Kingdom," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 123.]

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION.

Bill to make more effectual provision for preventing the pollution of rivers and streams, ordered to be brought in by Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Wilson-Todd, Mr. Hobhouse, Sir John Dorington, Sir Henry Howorth, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Brigg, Sir John Brunner, and Sir Walter Foster.

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION BILL.

"To make more effectual provision for preventing the pollution of rivers and streams," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 2nd April, and to be printed. [Bill 124.]

WAR LOAN BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months. One of my objections to this Bill is that I do not think it is a proper way to raise money for carrying on the present war. At the time of the Crimean War a great deal of the necessary cost was raised by direct taxation, whereas only something like £12,000,000 is now to be raised by taxation on articles of consumption. The balance is to be raised by way of loan repayable in ten years. I think that is not a candid way of meeting the expense of the war. Sooner or later this loan will have to be repaid, and the burden will then fall on the taxpayers. By means of it you are deceiving and deluding the people as to what the war is actually costing. I think it would be more candid and fairer to impose additional taxation to a greater extent, especially as we are told that the war fever is so strong in England that there would be no objection to fresh taxation. So much from that point of view. But I object to participating in the slightest degree in the passage of this loan from an Irish point of view. I consider, quite sincerely and honestly, that it would be little short of a crime if Irish Members in the present financial condition of their country sat silent while this additional burden is put upon it, and if they failed to protest by their votes against this fresh imposition. I calculate that, at the very least, three millions if not four millions of this loan will fall upon the shoulders of the Irish taxpayers. At any time that would be a serious cause of complaint in Ireland, but at the present time, when the whole country is agitated from end to end on the question as to the capability of the Irish people to bear the taxation now upon them, to impose a fresh burden is in my opinion little short of monstrous. The incapacity of the Irish people to bear the burden of taxation already upon them is not a matter of complaint by Irish Nationalists alone. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knows perfectly well that the agitation in Ireland during the last few years on the question of Imperial taxation has been maintained not merely by Nationalist Members, but by a large number of Unionist Members as well. The Royal Commission which inquired into the condition of Irish finance and into the question of the ability of the people to pay the Imperial burden already upon them

reported practically unanimously that considering all the circumstances of the case the Irish people were called upon to pay something between two and a half and three millions more every year than they ought to pay, having regard to the different conditions of Ireland and England, and above all having regard to the Act of Union at the commencement of the century, which specifically stated that the Irish people should only be taxed in proportion to their relative taxable capacity, and that abatements and exemptions should be made in their case. That Report was not drawn up by mere partisan Nationalists, but it was a Report presented by a Royal Commission composed of the principal experts of the day on financial matters, and they laid down the conclusion that Ireland was paying at least 2½ millions more towards Imperial taxation than she ought to pay. That is beyond dispute and cannot be denied. No attempt has, however, been made to enforce the conclusion of that Royal Commission. Under ordinary circumstances a Report of that kind would have been followed by legislation, and the defects which the Royal Commission had pointed out would have been remedied if an English question were concerned. But no action was taken with regard to Ireland.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now discussing the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I do not intend to go at length into the question, because it would not be strictly *à propos* of the matter under discussion, but I wish to point out that the Irish Members object to this Bill not only on its merits but because it has been shown that, independent of this fresh war taxation, Ireland is already paying several millions a year more than she should. No attempt has been made to remedy that injustice. On the contrary the Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of endeavouring to equalise Irish taxation and to remove the grievances of which many of his supporters in Ireland complain, asks the representatives of the Irish people, overtaxed and overburdened as Ireland is, to sanction this loan for the purpose of carrying on the war. I have no doubt English Members sometimes feel irritated at the constancy with which Irish

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Members refer to these financial proposals, but I say deliberately that not during the whole of this century has there been a more monstrous and more infamous proposition than that the Irish people should be called upon, in the present condition of their country, to pledge themselves to millions of fresh taxation for the purposes of the war. The stock of this loan is to be known as "war stock," and the bonds as "war bonds;" therefore, I assume I am entitled to go into the policy of the war. I have no desire to do so except very briefly; but this I will say, that whatever objection I had to the policy of this war, which has entailed this enormous cost, before this evening, within the last hour my objection has been doubled and trebled, and never since the commencement of these war discussions have I been so opposed to it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer calculated that the war would cost £60,000,000, but it will really cost between £65,000,000 and £66,000,000, because the right hon. Gentleman has not taken into account the surplus which would have been to the good had there been no war. We were told first of all—and a very plausible statement it was—that this war should be continued at all cost because certain dominions of Her Majesty had been invaded by the forces of the two Republics. That is quite true, though I hold my own opinion as to what led to that invasion. I was not at all surprised that Natal was invaded under the circumstances. At the same time, I was not surprised at the attitude of the English Members, who maintained that this money should be spent, and more if necessary, in order to clear Natal and every inch of Her Majesty's territory in South Africa from the invading Boers. I can understand that; but what I cannot understand, and what I protest against, is that when by an overwhelming force you have cleared the invaders out of Her Majesty's territory, you are not satisfied with that, and you refuse to consider terms of honourable peace with a brave and gallant people. Now we are told for the first time what we all along suspected, that this war is not a war to right the wrongs of British subjects in South Africa, not a war merely to clear Her Majesty's territory of invading forces, but a war waged against the independence of the two Republics. The Prime Minister stated in a speech not long ago that the

war was forced upon them to right the wrongs of British subjects in the Transvaal, and that they sought neither territory nor goldfields. The Duke of Devonshire said something of the same kind, and denied that there was any intention on the part of the Government to annex either the Transvaal or the Orange Free State. Now we are told by the First Lord of the Treasury that this war—this horrible carnival of bloodshed and misery and wretchedness—is to be carried on until the independence of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State is overthrown and swept away. After that declaration I object to this loan all the more strongly, and I shall vote more readily than I have ever yet voted against a single penny being granted. I venture to say that there was no Member in this House who listened altogether unmoved to the communication from the Presidents of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. You may disagree with them; you think, no doubt, they commenced this war without provocation; you think they were wrong from start to finish; but is there any Member in this House who, in his own breast, can withhold from these two States some tribute of admiration for the extraordinary valour and almost superhuman courage with which they have endeavoured to preserve what they consider to be their rights? And now these two men, having won some victories; when it seems that they are about to be overwhelmed; when they are about to be cleared out of the Queen's dominions; when they are considering any terms of peace which they could possibly, with an atom of self-respect, accept—when they make this offer, the answer of the Prime Minister to that offer will fill liberty-loving people throughout the world with despair, if not with disgust at the policy of Her Majesty's Government. No; no terms are to be considered. This war is to go on to its bloody end. Nothing is to satisfy the Government or the Colonial Secretary until Pretoria has been reached, and until the list of 15,000 killed, wounded and maimed British troops has been increased a thousandfold. This war is to go on with all its misery, all its bloodshed, all its terrible torture to those who fight, and those who are left behind, because, having got the power of enforcing every right that you could possibly claim for your British subjects

in the Transvaal, having got the power of dictating the terms on which your people should live in the future in the Transvaal, no terms will satisfy you except those which strike at the existence and self-respect of those Dutch farmers—terms which you know perfectly well make it absolutely certain that these men, after to-day, will continue to fight to the last ditch, and that they will not surrender as long as a shot is left in the locker. Where is the wise statesmanship which we are told governs the policy of this Government at the present time? I wish to goodness that Mr. Gladstone were alive. I wish to goodness that Mr. Gladstone were directing the affairs of this country, and I believe the necessity for this money we are asked for to-night would not have arisen. Mr. Gladstone would have offered the same fair and honourable terms which commanded the respect and the admiration of the world when the Boers inflicted a small defeat on the British forces at Majuba. If he were alive, directing the affairs of this country, what terms would he not have made when appealed to by the Presidents of these two Republics in the hour of British victory? He would have behaved with humanity, and would have said to these people, "Now we have demonstrated our strength; now that we have got 205,000 British troops in South Africa—more than one for each of your population; now that you see our power, and that it is only a question of money when we can subdue you, admit you cannot withstand our overwhelming forces and ask for peace." Mr. Gladstone would have given them peace on terms which would have secured for every British subject the fullest fair play for the future, and would have given them peace upon the only terms on which you can have any abiding peace in South Africa, and on terms also of consideration for the self-respect and the bravery of the Dutch population throughout the length and breadth of South Africa. It is all very well to ask for this thirty millions to carry on the war, and enable you to march to Pretoria and hoist your flag there, and to destroy the independence of these two countries. That is easy enough to do. You may destroy their independence; you may raze Pretoria to the ground; you may kill every soldier in the armies of the two Republics; but will that guarantee the permanent peace of South Africa? Will

that guarantee for the future to bring contentment or satisfaction to the minds of the vast concourse of Dutchmen in Cape Colony and Natal, and the majority of the whole population in South Africa, who are Dutch at the present time? I say, now is your time to make terms of peace regarding which the Dutch in the Cape and Natal will be able to say, "Well, after all, these English people have shown us their enormous power and strength, and when we acknowledged that and asked for peace they were magnanimous and generous enough to give us terms of peace which we could accept with self-respect." I say that is the policy which ought to actuate Her Majesty's Government, and which would win for England the respect of Europe and of the whole world. It is the only policy which will prevent the necessity for fresh military operations in South Africa. But if you go on with the policy that the blood of the British lion is up, and that you will be satisfied with nothing but to destroy the independence of these two small countries, you will earn the contempt of every liberty-loving people in every part of the world. That policy will perpetuate disaffection throughout every part of South Africa, and will make the Dutch in Cape Colony and Natal dissatisfied with your rule and wait for a chance of striking a blow for that independence which they so dearly prize. There is one point which always appeals to me in this matter, and which is always overlooked not only in this House but in the country, and that is that no matter what settlement you make you cannot help the whole of South Africa from Cape Town to the Zambesi being populated by Dutch people and English. These people will have to live for the future in South Africa. Are they to live together in peace, respecting each other; or are they to be obliged to live, as we have been forced to do in Ireland, not loving your rule? I say that, Dutch and English having to live together, you should pursue a policy which should commend itself to them in the hour of defeat—a policy of generosity and wisdom, and unless you do that you will only be breeding fresh trouble for this country. As for us in Ireland, we object to this war as being unjust; and, therefore, what is more natural than that we should come here and object to pay any portion of the money asked for these military opera-

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tions? Why, it is hard to understand the feeling which is afloat in England at the present time. It is hard to understand that this is what is called free England at all. The only place, so far as I can see, where any man in this free country can say a word against this war and this enormous taxation is the House of Commons. [HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!] Hon. Gentlemen opposite rapturously cheer that statement of mine, that the House of Commons is the only place where a word can be said against this iniquitous war and this enormous war expenditure, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin, the late Member for Plymouth, and many others. If they attempt to exercise the right of public meeting or free speech in free England to-day, what is the result?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot discuss the right of public meeting on the motion before the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I have no desire, Mr. Speaker, to do anything but obey your ruling in this matter. I have stated that these meetings were interfered with, for the purpose of showing that the only place where our protests can be made without having our persons injured, our property destroyed, and the houses of our families invaded by a war-like mob, is the House of Commons. Therefore we take this and every opportunity of entering our protest against this war. I say the time will come, and it is not very far distant, when there may be scenes of excitement outside this House amongst the taxpayers and the working people of this country. These scenes of excitement will not be created by pouring out the millions of the taxes wrung from the people for warlike preparations; but they will be caused in years to come, when this policy of crushing the independence of the South African Republics bears its fruit in continual disturbances in the Continent of Africa, and when the people find that the only return they get for this enormous expenditure of money, is to create in South Africa a larger and a more stubborn Ireland than you have here. I conclude by saying that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer—impatient as he may be, and impatient as his friends may be to vote this money—cannot complain if we pro-

test, as Irishmen, against having anything to do with this Vote—in the first place because we object to the war, and in the second place because Ireland is not entitled in any way to be asked to bear a share of its cost. They can hardly complain of us doing that, for ever since the session commenced we have opposed this war. As the representative of one of the Irish Nationalist constituencies I enter my protest, and I care very little whether the supporters of the Government complain of my doing so or not. I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): I rise to second the motion of my hon. friend. We were told when this war was entered into that it was only going to be a short war, costing something like £20,000,000. Those of us who knew something about the Dutch knew that it was not going to be such a short war, and I thought that the Dutch would not give up their independence without making a struggle to fight for it. We all know with what a light heart this war was entered upon, and we were told that our troops would be in Pretoria by Christmas. But what has been the result? My hon. friend has shown how this system of loan bamboozles the British public, and they are not made aware by it of what this iniquitous war is costing. It becomes our duty—objecting as we do to this war, to its origin, its continuance, and the spirit in which it is waged—as Nationalists to enter our protest at every stage and upon every occasion against this war. We have little or no interest in the expansion of your Empire, for it can bring to us nothing but taxation. As my hon. friend has proved, the very least that this Bill will put upon Ireland will be a burden of £3,000,000. When we consider that the people of Ireland have been starving for ten years in the west of Ireland, and we cannot get a wretched pittance to keep the life in our people, then it is our stern duty to say that Ireland is hostile to this country, and that we object to any taxation which includes any payment which falls upon the already overtaxed people of Ireland. I think we should be false to ourselves and to those who sent us here if we did not enter our protest. Although our numbers may be small owing to some of our supporters having to go elsewhere, it

will be the duty of those who are here to protest against this proposal, and show that we have no hand or part in continuing a war which will bring nothing but misery in South Africa, and which will cost our own people an enormous sum of money.

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘upon this day six months.’”—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question.”

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I should like to say a word or two upon the Bill itself, and to invite the Chancellor of the Exchequer's attention to one or two points in connection with it. I must, in the first instance, congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon the success of this financial operation; but I am bound to qualify that congratulation with the expression of a doubt, that a loan which is so popular, not only with the public of this kingdom but with the public of other countries, must be a remarkably favourable loan to those who may be fortunate enough to obtain a share, and that suggests whether the Treasury in settling the terms of the loan have done in the matter the best they could for the public Exchequer. I congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the mode in which he has issued this loan. I approve, and I think the House and the country approve, of the mode in which he has issued the loan, for he has appealed to the mass of the people and they have responded, and the loan is not weighted by any heavy intermediate commission. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will, I am sure, contrast his experience on this occasion with the not very satisfactory mode in which the last money obtained on Government credit was raised—I mean the Local Loans Loan which was raised in the month of January. Within a very few days of that loan being issued at £99 12s. 6d., I think, it was sold in the public market at something like £2 or £3 premium, and it stands pretty much at that figure now.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): It was issued by tender.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Yes, by tender, I know; but there is no doubt a limited number of persons formed, to use a common expression, the ring by which that loan was manipulated. At all events, this is a great improvement upon that mode of procedure. But I should like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give us his reasons why he has not adopted on this occasion, in any shape or form, the principle of the terminable annuity. In the second clause of the Bill he has provided, as far as Parliament can enact, that at the expiration of ten years from the present time, this loan shall be redeemed on the payment of £100 sterling and the payment of all arrears of interest. He has also provided that the cost, both the principal and interest, of this loan should not be a charge on the sum of £23,000,000 which is the permanent annual charge for the National Debt, but that the interest and the principal will have to be met outside the debt charge. I should like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say if I am right in that, namely, that the £23,000,000 will be raised and applied outside this debt which will have to be provided for outside that sum. I think that is a satisfactory provision. At the same time, I think it would have been better if the principle of annuity could have been introduced into this loan. I know the Treasury has a very strong objection to terminable annuities, but I should like the Treasury to appeal to the public. I have always held the opinion that if the general public had a chance of tendering for these annuities there is a class of persons who would come to the aid of the Treasury and avail themselves of securing a fixed sum annually for a limited period. That I know is not a popular view in the Treasury, and I should like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say whether anything outside the sentiment and prejudice of the Treasury has induced him to abandon the principle of annuity on this occasion, because the principle of annuity would secure the annual liquidation of a portion of the debt. Now, I should like to say a word upon our position with reference to this loan. I do not think that until the war expenditure has come to an end we are able to say exactly what proportion will have to be met by loan and what proportion will have to be met by taxation. I think that the general opinion of the House and

of the country is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has, at all events, so far as this operation is concerned, very fairly combined the two principles of taxing the taxpayer of to-day and also of charging the general finance of the country with a portion of this expenditure by way of loan. I think my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouth said that this was the largest borrowing that has been made, certainly for purposes of this description, for something like forty years.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Since 1815.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: I think we are entitled, in passing such a measure, to look at what really is the financial position of the country. Of course we are cautioned against optimism or pessimism with respect to our military operations. The feeling of the country to-day is that the moment that anything very successful happens the people are in a very optimistic frame of mind, and the moment that anything not very successful takes place they are plunged in the depths of despair. [Cries of "No, no!"] Well, perhaps that is too strong a word; I will say the depths of gloom. But so far as finance is concerned we must look at the matter from another point of view altogether. We must deal with the matter really from the point of view of the position of the country; and I desire to quote a figure or two to the House upon that point. My right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouth contrasted the present proposals with those which were made in 1857 when Sir George Cornewall Lewis wound up the expenditure on the Crimean War. But in contrasting that position with the position to-day we ought also to look at the financial position of the country to-day and its financial position then, and we must remember that the expenditure of this country and the amount raised in taxation has enormously increased in the last thirty, forty, or fifty years. Going back only twenty-five years—to 1874 or 1875—the gross revenue of the country was something like £75,000,000. The other night the Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of the receipts of last year, receipts which had nothing to do with the war, as £125,000,000. Therefore, we have an increased revenue and an increased expenditure of something like £40,000,000

or £50,000,000 in that period, coming out of the taxation of the country. But there is another item in the account. Since the Crimean War, and since a much later period, there is a class of taxation and a class of expenditure which has arisen in this country, and year by year until it has approached a gigantic amount. I refer to local rates. It has already a national debt of its own, and contrasts not most favourably with the National Debt of the country. It must be remembered that the ratepayers and the taxpayers are the same people, and this year the ratepayers of England and Wales are called upon to pay in rates upwards of 40 millions sterling. That is in addition to the subventions from the Treasury, to the share in Imperial taxation, which are given to local bodies. I find no fault with that expenditure. In fact, I am a strong advocate of it. I think it is an expenditure that will increase, and ought to increase. But, when you are regarding the burdens of the present taxpayers and ratepayers, you must look all round, and you must remember that the 125 millions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is between forty and fifty millions short of the real amount to be paid by the taxpayers of this country. Now I take the figures so far as the National Debt is concerned, and that perhaps is more germane to the present Bill. In 1837, the year the Queen came to the Throne, the National Debt was £843,000,000, and if the local loans then outstanding for a small amount and the balances at the Exchequer are deducted from that amount the real net National Debt at that date was £843,000,000. I take another date. At the close of the Crimean War the National Debt was £842,000,000. Against that there were assets amounting to £23,000,000, and, therefore, the real National Debt was under £820,000,000. What was the National Debt last year? On the 5th of April, 1899, the gross liabilities of the State amounted to £635,000,000. The generation that has been taxpaying between 1857 and now has borne the burden of that large reduction of taxation; taxpayers have discharged their share of the debt, so far as paying it off is concerned, within that period. We have now assets amounting in round figures to £27,000,000, and, therefore, our financial position at the present time

is that the real net liability of the State is something over £600,000,000. When we are asked by Her Majesty's Government to sanction for the purpose of this war an addition to that debt of £30,000,000, the financial authorities of the country are entitled to take up the position that, having regard to the financial position of the country as a whole, and to the fact that the burden of taxation is now so fairly adjusted between all classes of taxpayers and so wisely levied in the manner in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Member for West Monmouthshire explained to the House the pressure of that taxation is very slightly felt; and as this debt of £30,000,000 is to be paid off in ten years—a promise which I hope will be faithfully redeemed, and it will be redeemed if Chancellors of the Exchequer only stand firm and do not give way to the criticisms of either friends or opponents—I think the House is assenting to a financial arrangement to which there is no just ground of complaint, and which will meet with the general approval of the people.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I do not think the raising of a loan of £30,000,000 will be a very difficult operation to an Empire with such resources as our own. I think my right hon. friend is to be congratulated on the success which has attended the issue of the loan. I only hope he will be able so to influence those who probably now have the direction of the operation that as far as possible the loan may be placed in the hands of small investors, and I was going to say the British public as distinguished from the more powerful and wealthy financiers, but I believe I ought to say the British and Irish public. We have been told that from every part of Her Majesty's dominions applications have poured in, and notwithstanding what the hon. Member for East Clare says, if we were allowed to inquire into the sources of the applications I believe a great many of the applications would be found to have emanated from Ireland. In congratulating my right hon. friend on the success and skill of this operation, I would only say, with regard to the extremely interesting figures which have been read out by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that I think there is one moral and one lesson which ought to be deeply taken to heart

by Chancellors of the Exchequer, from whatever quarter of the House they happen to come. I mean the matter to which the right hon. Gentleman referred when he pointed out that, although now we were more wealthy, we had less debt to bear. It is true that we are more wealthy, but if we had the same debt to bear our greater expenditure would cause a great deal more pressure on the taxpayers of this country. Therefore, while I am the first to recognise that when the nation is at war the greater part, if not the whole, cost of the war may legitimately be raised by borrowing, and by suspending the Sinking Fund, still, I earnestly pray that, except on these occasions, the policy of reducing the Debt of the country will go on in the future, and be religiously and diligently carried out.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) : I see from the newspapers that the loan which was issued at 98½ is already at 2½ per cent. premium. Therefore the right hon. Gentleman is in the position of being able to distribute to those who get the loan the comfortable little sum of £750,000. Well, I am not complaining of the Chancellor of the Exchequer bringing it out at the issue price. I am perfectly aware that it is always necessary to bring out what is intended for a popular loan below what the actual price would be, because, naturally, financiers are not anxious at any particular moment to buy Consols. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he was making a speech on this loan, said he would have special consideration for the smaller applicants. Well, I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will thoroughly carry out that view, for certainly if this £750,000 is to be distributed among the public of this country, it is more desirable that it should go into a great many pockets than into a very few. Therefore I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will tell us that he will proceed on this system : that he will first allot in full to all who have applied for, say, £100 worth of the stock ; that he will then take those who have applied for £200, and that he will distribute it in this way among the greatest number of people he possibly can. I think that would only be fair and in accordance with the expression the Chancellor of the Exchequer used. One of the troubles of these loans has been that some great plutocrats in the

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City who are able to take up a large amount of stock get allotments. If the money is to be distributed let it be among the poor instead of among wealthy gentlemen in the City. I am not going into the policy of this war at the present moment—I have done so before ; but we have had a document presented to us to-day—the despatch which has been sent by Her Majesty's Government to the Presidents of the two Republics—which may certainly alter the views of a great many persons in regard to this war. It must clearly be understood that, while a great many of us on this side of the House do not assent for one moment either to the grounds which the Government have given for going into this war or to the scope which they intend at present to give to the war, at the present moment these two Republics are fighting, rightly or wrongly, for their independence, and we are carrying on the war in order to destroy the independence of these two Republics. I have never heard in modern times of such an intention avowed in regard to a war. The last time an independent country was blotted out of existence was the case of Poland, and surely we ought not to take the case of Poland as an example. There have been many wars since then, and I do not remember one single instance in which a foreign and independent country was destroyed by the victorious belligerent. We had a case a little while ago with respect to Greece. I am not one of those who have so high an opinion of the Sultan of Turkey that I would have objected if you had sent an ultimatum, and if you had caused us to spend money and blood to prevent Turkey from absorbing Greece if it had been the intention of the Sultan to do so ; but that was not proposed. We have to take the opinion not only of Europe but of a large majority of Americans—we have to take the opinion of the whole civilised world, and you will find that they will protest against this attack on the rights of independent countries. I have been against this war all along, but I perfectly understood the position of Gentlemen opposite—it was a most difficult position—when, whether the war was just or unjust, whether it was our fault or the fault of the Boers, they were in our territory, and it was absolutely necessary to drive them out. I also understood those—though I cannot say I quite shared in it—who thought that

our arms had suffered in prestige. I did not think so myself. I had a higher opinion of the valour of Englishmen than perhaps hon. Gentlemen opposite. Still, my respect and my belief in the prestige of English arms was not in any way destroyed. I can understand that military gentlemen in some sort of way wished to have an opportunity before the war was over of re-establishing that prestige. The Boers have been driven out of our territory. [Cries of "No!"] Well, perhaps there may be half a dozen Boers hanging about, but for all practical purposes they have been driven out, and the British Army is now invading their territories. If you will take the trouble to read the despatch of the Presidents of the two Republics you will see the terms on which they are willing to see peace restored. It will be admitted that we have practically driven them out of our territory. Under these circumstances I cannot, for myself, understand what ground you have for continuing this war. Can you tell me of any war in which the vanquished side asked for terms, and were told that the victors would only grant terms in the capital of the defeated country, and on condition of their surrendering their independence? I call this thing an iniquity. I call this a positive iniquity. [Cries of "Oh!"] Well, hon. Gentlemen may say "Oh!" if they like, but I regard it as an iniquity and a disgrace to this country to propose such terms. Perhaps the question of iniquity does not appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite. It is not only a crime, it is also a blunder. I do not believe this is the way to establish peace and harmony and good feeling in South Africa. I cannot forget that the majority in our own colonies are of Dutch extraction. Although they have been loyal for nearly a century to this country, and are prepared to remain loyal, their sympathies are entirely with their kith and kin, and if you wipe out the independence of these two Republics, you will create a state of things in South Africa under which you will have to maintain your rule by the sword not for a short time, but for a long time. In these circumstances I cannot help rising to register my protest at the earliest opportunity against the despatch sent by Lord Salisbury to the Presidents of the two Republics. There are many who share with you the belief that this is a

just and necessary war, there are many who were with you in driving these people out of our territories, and who wished to establish our prestige; but I very much doubt whether the country, who are called upon to pay this enormous taxation and to sacrifice the blood of the soldiers, will be with you in the further prosecution of this war. I do wish a better spirit existed among hon. Gentlemen opposite and the Government of the country. You are at present appealing to the lowest passions outside of this House. I do not believe you will succeed in the long run. It may be that the people will be carried away by the feeling which at present exists among Englishmen, but in the long run they will see that they have been fooled into this war by the vilest body of financiers that ever existed in this world; and that the opportunity had been taken to lay hold of the territory and gold, which Lord Salisbury himself boasted we did not wish for.

MR. VICARY GIBBS (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): On this side of the House we are not prepared to accept the hon. Member for Northampton either as a moralist or a prophet. I quite agreed with the concluding part of his speech, and it was the only part I did agree with, that this is not the proper time for such a speech. The purpose for which I rose was to answer the criticisms of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton. In complimenting the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the success of the loan, he said that its very success pointed to the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not altogether safeguarded the interests entrusted to him, and that he might have issued the loan a little higher. It is very easy for my right hon. friend or anyone else to be wise after the event. I wish to point out that in loans of this kind it is quite impossible to hit the happy mean, the exact point which will make a successful issue, and yet not waste a penny which might have been saved. No one who comes from that part of the City I come from will say that what I say is not true. The hon. Gentleman himself objects to the tender system, but I know perfectly well if he had been where the Chancellor of the Exchequer is he would have done exactly what the right hon. Gentleman has done. There was only one

part of the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton germane to the subject. That was in regard to the giving of full allotments to the small investors. I quite recognise the propriety and the desirability of the small investors having this loan if they can take it, but anyone who has studied financial matters knows perfectly well that neither this nor any other Government can rely for their success on the small investors alone. If they were to take the step of giving £100, £200, £300, and so on to everyone who applied for these sums, and then issuing letters of regret to everybody else they would give the impression that those who applied for a large amount would not get an allotment. They would thus discourage those capitalists and plutocrats—"bloated," I think, is the term generally applied to them—who, though they may be a most unpleasant feature of modern civilisation, are a painful and disagreeable necessity to any Chancellor of the Exchequer if you are to carry on the financial business of the country. It would not be fair to them, it would be monstrous, not to give them allotments. I have heard *pro rata* allotments advocated. It would be equally unfair to shut out big men altogether—those who cover the loan over and over again. When people see an enormous amount of applications they must remember that these applicants know they will receive only part of what they apply for. I hope the House will excuse me if I have taken up their time, for I have some means of knowing something about these matters.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): The Member for Northampton owes a debt of gratitude to his constituents, because they have enabled him to make speeches in this House which they would not listen to themselves. How long they will enable him to make such speeches is a question which will shortly be decided between him and them. In referring to the position of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, the hon. Member used misleading analogies, which demand a short word in reply. Poland was divided by Austria, Russia, and Prussia, but did Poland invade Austria, Russia, and Prussia? There was a conspiracy against Poland by which they secretly partitioned that country. The case was very different here. It is the Boers who have invaded our territory.

Mr. Vicary Gibbs.

It is we who, up to the present moment, have been repelling invasion. The last message from the Presidents seems to be not less insulting than the ultimatum by which they began this war, and certainly it is a deal more hypocritical. Nobody can say that that message is a reason for taking a more favourable view of the Republics than we previously entertained. With regard to this loan, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton understated his case when he added only £40,000,000 to the local expenditure. I obtained the figures last year for not only England, Scotland, and Wales, but also Ireland, and after deducting a contribution of £12,000,000 for the central Government, I made the total local expenditure £85,000,000. Some part of that is what is called reproductive expenditure, but it does not always reproduce. The total gross expenditure I reckoned to be—

SIR HENRY FOWLER: I did not say expenditure; I said rates.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: There are other kinds, we know, raised by toll and so on. I wish to make only one remark about the local debt. For years past, as the National Debt has been increasing, the local debt has been increasing in a larger proportion. Undoubtedly that must be taken into account, although possibly the National Debt may soon outstrip in rapidity of movements even the local debt. It is important that the House should remember that this £30,000,000 is not the whole of the indebtedness which will be added by this war. In addition to the £30,000,000 War Loan, there are £5,000,000 which the right hon. Gentleman has diverted from the repayment of the National Debt in the shape of the saving realised last year.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): There were £8,000,000 more last year.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: £5,000,000 saving. There were £10,000,000 voted last year; but I am dealing with the present year. It is true the right hon. Gentleman does not intend these £30,000,000 to be a permanent addition to the Debt, though, I take it, the interest will act that way. The interest will be something like £825,000 a year, and he

must get that £825,000 out of taxation, I presume. As to this £30,000,000, the right hon. Gentleman proposes to repay it within ten years. How is he going to do it? First of all he trusts in the goldmines of the Transvaal. If they will not find the money he trusts in Providence and the taxpayers. But finally it comes to this—he will have to add it to the National Debt. What he will finally fall back upon will be terminable annuities, the renewal of which will mean practically an addition to the National Debt. We hope it will not come to that, and possibly it may not. There is another point. The House must not run away with the idea that we are getting this money at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The loan is for £30,000,000, but we are getting only £29,500,000, because the loan is issued at $98\frac{1}{2}$. That would return £29,550,000, but the broker's percentage and the advertising and other expenses, which would certainly amount to £50,000, are to be paid by the State. Ten years hence for that £29,500,000 we shall have to repay £30,000,000. Consequently the interest is really more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. No doubt this loan might have been offered at a premium, but that would have been a mistake. No doubt also the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have issued Consols instead of a separate loan, but that, too, would have been a mistake. My belief is that, on the whole, although it does appear as if we were paying a little more than the public actually would demand, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken the right course, and he and the country are to be congratulated upon the readiness with which the loan has been subscribed.

MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale): The hon. Gentleman opposite said that the Boers had been fooled into this war. There is a great deal of truth in that statement. They have been fooled into the war largely by the speeches of Gentlemen sitting on the other side of the House, and they are fooled at present to continue the war by the same means. It is the old case over again of the telegram to the King of Greece. If those Gentlemen, instead of speaking as they have done, were plainly to tell their friends the Boers that the sooner they submit and throw themselves upon the mercy of this country the better, they would be doing something practical towards bringing this

war to a close. If such a course were taken this nation would be generous as well as just; but it does seem to me, as representing a businesslike constituency, that it is the duty of this country to be just before one speaks of generosity. I do not altogether like the financial proposals of the Government in so far as they relate to increased taxation, but as regards this particular measure I heartily and cordially concur, and would add my congratulations to the right hon. Gentleman for the admirable way in which he has managed to make the loan a success. Whatever difference of view there may be on the question of taxation, there can be no question that the Government have done the best that was possible in the circumstances. But there are many people in this country who sympathise with the motion I ventured a little while ago to put on the Paper, which stated that it was not desirable that any portion of the expenditure upon the war should be cast upon the British taxpayer, and suggested that sooner or later the whole of the war expenditure should be met by a loan, of which the interest and sinking fund should be paid from the resources of those territories which have hitherto been known as the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State. That is my view today, and I do not see anything in this Bill which is inconsistent with such a view. This is not the moment, however, to urge that question by dividing the House upon it, as such a course would be misconstrued. But I think the Government will make a mistake if they do not take into account the large body of public opinion which is really at the back of the suggestion I made. I have received from many parts of the country, quite unsolicited and unexpected, expressions of accord with the views I have ventured to express, and I simply leave the matter with the Government as one which should be considered at the proper time.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I do not intend at all to enter into the question of the war or the question of taxation. I simply rise for the purpose of thanking hon. Members for the approval which they have been good enough to accord to my effort in this matter, and of referring to one or two points raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolver-

hampton. He asked me why I did not endeavour to deal with this question by means of terminable annuities. He seemed to think that there was a rooted objection at the Treasury to terminable annuities, and that, therefore, that was the reason why I did not endeavour to raise this loan in that way. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that there is no such objection, either at the Treasury or in my own mind. If I could have raised this loan by terminable annuities, if I could have converted a large portion of the existing funded debt into terminable annuities, I should have been delighted to do so, provided those terminable annuities were taken up by the public at large; but that is precisely what the public will never do. It is absolutely impossible to induce the public to any large extent to take terminable annuities, and it would have been a terrible mistake to attempt to obtain 30 millions in that way. The right hon. Gentleman has suggested in a very good-natured way that we have paid too much for this loan. Well, that is perfectly true. I was informed to-day by the Government broker that the loan as it stands is at a premium of $1\frac{1}{2}$ on the results of the applications, and of course everyone knows that the amount asked for has been subscribed ten times over. But I am not at all ashamed—and after what has been said this evening I think I have no cause to be ashamed—of the price at which the loan was issued. What was the position with which I had to deal? I had to provide £30,000,000. That is a very large sum—the largest loan which has ever been contracted by this country in one sum since 1815. With universal consent, I decided that it was better that that sum should be raised by stock or bonds for a shorter term than by an issue of Consols. I think I may also claim to have obtained universal consent to the principle that, having to raise so large a sum, it was better to issue the loan at a fixed price than attempt to raise it by tender. I cordially desired that it should be taken up by the public at large; and that it should be widespread throughout the country. We have taken every possible step to secure that result, and up to last night there had been 18,000 separate applications of individuals for participating in the loan—applications coming from all parts of the country. I hope that before

Sir M. Hicks Beach.

the list is closed everyone throughout the United Kingdom and even in our colonies will have had an opportunity of considering whether they will assist in it or not. But, it having been decided to issue the loan at a fixed price, it was clearly essential that such a price should be fixed as would ensure that the money should be raised. It would have been the gravest mistake on my part, for the sake of saving a comparatively small sum—a sum large in itself, but small in comparison with the £30,000,000 of the loan—to incur a real risk of not having the loan subscribed. Any such result would have been a national misfortune. Further, if the loan had been only just covered, or only a little more than covered, I should have been quite justly blamed for parsimony in trying to abstract from the public more than they cared to give, and for having thus secured what everyone would have called a failure. I knew that I should be blamed whatever happened; but I have not been very much blamed to-night, because the loan is at a premium. No doubt, events have shown that it might have been possible to issue the loan at a slightly higher price. I admit it. But in fixing the price I undertook a great responsibility. I took the best advice I could get; and I may venture to say that, acting on my own responsibility, I fixed the price a little higher than that at which many of those whom I consulted would have fixed it. I am sure that none of my advisers would for a moment have suggested that I should fix it as high as 99. What is the result? Those persons who are fortunate enough to obtain allotments will have a very good investment, and will be able, if they choose, to make a profit by it; but not by any means the profit which some people may suppose from the nominal premium, for any attempt to sell in large amounts after the allotment would inevitably bring down the price, and the result would be very different from that which some people have been led to expect. In considering the price, I hope the House will remember that I had also to consider the possibilities. I had to fix the price last Thursday, and I had to consider what might happen in the course of the week following; because, in order to ensure a large public subscription, it was necessary to give a considerable time for application. Suppose that, instead of the successes of which we have happily heard, we had had some

serious reverse in South Africa. Suppose some wholly unexpected complication had arisen in foreign affairs. Prices might have gone down on the Stock Exchange to a degree which would materially affect the issue, and it might never have been taken at all. I ask the pardon of the House for alluding to these things; but they are not known to everyone out of doors, and when people see the loan at a premium they naturally begin to think that perhaps we could have got more money for it. It is very easy in these things to be wise after the event. I believe sincerely that I acted for the best, and that the country will not grudge anything I have done, seeing that the large subscription for the loan and its great success are due quite as much to the strong patriotic feeling throughout the country as to a desire to find a good investment. It is my desire, and has been from the first, that this loan should be subscribed for by, and should come into the hands of the public at large. There has been no underwriting, no guarantee, none of those high commissions or opportunities for making large profits on the part of great wealthy houses which generally accompany the issue of a large loan. We have thrown ourselves upon the public; the public have responded to the appeal; and it will be my endeavour, in concert with the authorities of the Bank of England, to secure that there shall be no favouritism whatever in the allotment, that *bona fide* applicants, whether for large or small sums, shall all be fairly considered, and that if anyone has an advantage it shall be those who have made application for small amounts.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not rise for the purpose of criticising the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman in reference to the issue of this loan. Nobody who has been in the position I have occupied would ever attempt to criticise the prescription of the family physician, who is necessarily more acquainted with the constitution of the patient than anybody else. I am perfectly well aware there were many circumstances which had to be taken into account. But I cannot quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman that everybody has formed the opinion that the price fixed was the highest price it was possible to obtain. I have certainly heard opinions of high authority that it might have

been issued at a higher figure. There is no doubt that this loan has some advantages over Consols, and it has also its disadvantages. It has the advantage that it continues its interest of $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. for a longer period than it could be obtained from Consols. On the other hand, there is the disadvantage that it may be or will be paid off within ten years. These are circumstances the effects of which are difficult to calculate. I quite agree that the right hon. Gentleman in his position was bound to avoid any risk of the failure of the loan. But he had at his back not merely the great resources of this country but also the strong feeling in favour of the loan which predominates at this time throughout the country. I do not desire to complain of what has been done. The loan has been a great success, and the right hon. Gentleman may be congratulated upon it. I quite agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he could not have raised this loan on terminable annuities. There is no public demand, except of a most limited character, for terminable annuities. I confess I have myself a prejudice in favour of issuing loans at par, and giving whatever price is necessary for the purpose. It looks better that the country should issue its loans at par. The system in old days of raising loans at a very low sum in order to have apparently a low rate of interest was a very bad system, and we have suffered from it ever since. If Pitt had raised his loans at par, and given the interest demanded at the time, the interest would long ago have diminished, and we should not have been saddled with the enormous sum of the present debt. These are really questions to be considered *in camera* by the Treasury rather than discussed in the House of Commons. I rose really to express my anxiety that we should contemplate the future redemption of this debt. I understand the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that he would keep alive the established provision for the redemption of the old debt, which has been naturally and reasonably suspended this year, and that he would make a separate provision for the redemption of this debt. I only wish that that should be on record. There is one other point to which I would allude. My right hon. friend the Member for East Wolverhampton must have not quite clearly expressed himself or I misunderstood him. As I understand him he

gave as a reason for raising this loan that though we were a richer country yet the taxation of the country was heavier than at the time of the Crimean War, and the reason he gave for that statement was that we were raising a much greater revenue now than we were at that time. But taxation may yield a great deal more money and yet be considerably lighter in its incidence. When Sir Robert Peel introduced the income tax it produced about £700,000 for a penny; now it produces more than £2,100,000, or three times as much. But the taxation is no heavier than it was. The argument that, because three times as much is produced, the taxation is therefore three times as heavy, would not be a sound argument at all. At the time of the Crimean War the tea duty was raised to 1s. 9d. in the lb. The taxation at that time was very much heavier than at present. Therefore, when I ventured the other night to say that taxation was borne with greater patience in those days than at the present time I was well founded in my statement, because the weight of taxation per square inch of the population, if I may use the term, was far greater then than now. We are much more able to bear taxation now, although the lump sum raised from the revenue is far greater than it was at that period. I am very glad to hear that the Chancellor of the Exchequer does recognise fully the duty of making provision for the redemption of this debt. I understood from the right hon. Gentleman the other night that, as soon as peace was concluded, he would inform the House of Commons of the measures he contemplated for that purpose.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I said that when peace was concluded we should have

to consider what the amount of the debt was, and also how much of the debt would have to be paid by the Transvaal.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Those are both circumstances of which I desire to be informed, especially the latter. It is of very great importance that we should know what the total amount of the debt is, and I only hope that it may not be greater than the amount for which we are now providing. I hope the right hon. Gentleman is now considering and maturing his plans for making it the first charge upon the Transvaal, because I understand that we are only to come in as liable in a secondary degree. If that is so I think that will be a very satisfactory arrangement.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I only wish to say one word. This night will be a memorable one in the history of the country, because to-night we have commenced a new policy. We have heard this war called a defensive war. Now, from the statement which the First Lord of the Treasury made to-night we know exactly what the war is about. All sorts of theories were put about before, but now the right hon. Gentleman has declared distinctly that the war is to be carried on to destroy the independence of two free Republics. I wish to emphasise that. I only wish to say that, if that is to be the object of this war, and if it is to be carried on without any attempt to stop it, it is, in my opinion, a cowardly and infamous war.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 268; Noes, 21. (Division List No. 65.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir. Alex F.
Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus H. Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt Hon Herbert Henry
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barlow, John Emmott
Bartley, George C. T.

Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, Rt. Hn. W. W. B. (Hants)
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Alexander H.
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bullard, Sir Harry

Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Chas. (Glasgow)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Edward
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cawley, Frederick
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)

Sir William Harcourt.

Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Clare, Octavius Leigh
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
 Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
 Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Crambie, John William
 Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Currie, Sir Donald
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
 Denny, Colonel
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir Frd. Dixon
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Doxford, Sir William T.
 Drage, Geoffrey
 Dunn, Sir William
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William H.
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
 Emmott, Alfred
 Evans, S. T. (Glamorgan)
 Faber, George Denison
 Fardell, Sir T. George
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Fenwick, Charles
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Ferguson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manc'r)
 Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 Fitzwygram, General Sir F.
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
 Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J.
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
 Gold, Charles
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorat, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. George's)
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Green, W. D. (Wesnesbury)
 Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
 Gretton, John
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Harwood, George
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
 Heath, James
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Hedderwick, Thos. Chas. H.

Henderson, Alexander
 Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampste'd)
 Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
 Hobhouse, Henry
 Holland, William Henry
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hozier, Hn. James Henry C.
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Humphreys-Owen, Arther C.
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Jessel, Captain Herbert M.
 Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Joicey, Sir James
 Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hn. Sir U.
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
 Kimber, Henry
 Kinloch, Sir J. George Smyth
 Kitson, Sir James
 Knowles, Lees
 Lafone, Alfred
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. W. Edw. H.
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Sw'n's a)
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
 Lonsdale, John Brownlee
 Lough, Thomas
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Lyell, Sir Leonard
 Macartney W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 Maclean, James Mackenzie
 Macleure, Sir John William
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Crae, George
 M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
 Malcolm, Ian
 Marks, Henry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
 Melville, Beresford V.
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Monk, Charles James
 Montagu, Hon. J. S. (Hants.)
 More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hn. F. (Monmouthsh.)
 Morgan, J. L. (Carmarthen)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Myers, William Henry
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)

Parkes, Ebenezer
 Pease, H. Pike (Darlington)
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (LancaSW)
 Plunkett, Rt. Hon. H. Curzon
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
 Renshaw, Charles Bine
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, Sir Thos. (Hartlep.)
 Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
 Round, James
 Runciman, Walter
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Savory, Sir Joseph
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
 Sidelotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sidebottom, Tharrop (Stalybr.)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Smith, J. Parker (Lanarks)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Sir Henry M. (Lambeth)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M' Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strachey, Edward
 Strause, Arthur
 Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Ushorne, Thomas
 Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
 Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Wason, Eugene
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Weir, James Galloway
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E. (T'n)
 Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-u.-L.)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Williams, Joseph Powell (Birm)
 Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'rsfd)
 Woods, Samuel
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Younger, William
 Yoxall, James Henry
 TELLE'S FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
 Ambrose, Robert
 Blake, Edward
 Crilly, Daniel
 Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
 Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
 Doogan, P. C.
 Jameson, Major J. Eustace

Kilbride, Denis
 Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
 Macaleese, Daniel
 M'Dermott, Patrick
 Molloy, Bernard Charles
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)

O'Malley, William
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Redmond, William (Clare)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns
 TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Captain Donelan and Mr.
 Patrick O'Brien.

Bill read a second time and committed for to-morrow.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES (EXCESS), 1898-9.

1. £10, Prisons (England and the Colonies).

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

2. 430,000, Number of Land Forces.

*COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I listened to the admirable speech of the Under Secretary of State for War with much interest, and there is one statement made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean with which I fully agree. He said the speech of the Under Secretary for War was charming, but that is an epithet which would apply to all his speeches. The charm in his speeches consists in what may be read between the lines. As the right hon. Baronet has pointed out, perhaps the reading between the lines could not be so readily detected yesterday as in his other speeches. I have heard military officers talk loudly about reform before they went to the War Office, but after they have been a short time within that establishment, except under the genial influence of the dinner table, the talk about reform went very much in the background. It has been the same with those who have been officially connected with it in this House, and there is no more prominent example of it than the right hon. Gentleman who

leads the Opposition. He spoke yesterday of the steady progress which there has been in the Army during the last thirty years. I can only say to him that if he had spent those thirty years as a practical soldier anxious for the efficiency of the Army—which I am certain he would have been—he would look now with almost feelings of despair and hopelessness upon his own utterances on that subject of reform. I am quite willing to allow that this is no time for pressing reform upon the War Office, for any attempt at reform now would only tend to dislocate the military machinery. I believe that the War Office at the present time is doing its very best, and has done its very best ever since the war broke out. I believe those employed at the War Office are working conscientiously for the good of the country, and whatever faults may be found with the conduct and the preparations for the war I do not believe that they have been the result of any individual slackness or want of knowledge and determination to do well for the country, but from faults which were inherent in the military system under which our Army exists at the present time. I am sorry to say that the Government at the present moment are very undecided as to what they say about the possibility of reforming our present system. We heard somewhat grudgingly of the possibility of an inquiry. Well, we all know what an inquiry means. Whenever a storm of public opinion beats upon a Government we have a Committee formed from those who sit on this side of the House and those who sit on the other, and they always put up a good stout umbrella, which is named a Royal Commission, or a Committee of Inquiry. They sit down very comfortably under that umbrella, and from time to time one of the ministers gets up and looks outside. If he finds that the storm is still beating, he says, "Let us have some more inquiry"; and so they go on, hoping that

that storm will pass by and the sunshine of popularity again be spread over them. I am very much afraid this will be the result of this attitude of inquiry which the Government have somewhat unwillingly promised to take up. We are now successful in the war, and that success may go on until the conclusion. Then public opinion will be slackening in its attention upon the state of the Army. They may say that the Army has won these victories and been victorious, and if mistakes have been committed let them be put upon one side, and the sunshine of public opinion may again shine upon the War Office. But for the good of the country and the defence of the Empire we want something more than an inquiry. The Under Secretary for War spoke yesterday of the many lessons we shall have learned from this war. This seems to me to point to very little except inquiry. We are told that we ought to wait until the war is over. There is no doubt that for all matters of detail we ought to wait. We should wait for the experience of those generals who are now leading our Army so successfully in South Africa, in order that we may know what they think of our system. What we need at the present time, and what the country needs, is that there shall be a definite expression on the part of the Government that not only shall there be an inquiry, not only shall there be a study of the reforms suggested from the seat of war, but that the Government shall promise that there shall be a complete and far-reaching reform of our military system. I believe that no such reform can take place unless there is some readjustment, and even a division of the work at the War Office among the military advisers on the headquarters staff. It seems to me that there are three possibilities with regard to that readjustment. There is the extension of the present system, which may be roughly called the same system as that which exists at the Admiralty Board. I am one of those who think that an extension of that system is possible, but if it is extended and made permanent there must be a distinct responsibility resting with each of the military advisers of the Crown. At the present time we have no such direct responsibility. The Secretary of State for War, when he is challenged about anything connected with the Army, is chivalrous and says he

alone is responsible. That is no doubt a very chivalrous attitude and good feeling which we all admire, but I do not think that this practice is one which is for the best interests of the Army. We want to know with whom rests the responsibility for the military advice, and unless the work is much more clearly separated than it is at the present time, it is impossible that there should be direct responsibility. Whether it be the case of the Commander-in-Chief, the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, or any of the other advisers, the responsibility must be direct and it must be clear, and without that responsibility I am perfectly certain that we cannot obtain efficiency in the Army. The second mode of readjustment seems to me to be a compromise between the present system of the Admiralty Board and what may be called the one man management of the military side which was in existence before 1895. It is to make a Commander-in-Chief responsible jointly with a military administrator and divide the executive and the administration between them, but that would be very difficult. I must say that I cannot work such a scheme out, and I am doubtful as to the possibility of it. Then I come to the third system, that of making the Commander-in-Chief solely responsible for both executive and administrative functions. If you can get that system under—

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and gallant Gentleman is now discussing the constitution of the War Office, and that can only be discussed upon the War Office Vote, and is not relevant to this Vote.

*COLONEL WELBY: But the headquarters staff comes under this Vote. I think it is mentioned in the Vote on page 10, but I have almost finished, and I will not dwell upon that point at all. Whatever is done with regard to the headquarters staff, a new name should be given to the responsible heads. In the Army, an adjutant or quartermaster is a subordinate officer, and it seems to me to call an officer of such responsibility an adjutant-general or quartermaster-general is to put him in a false position in regard to the common terminology of the Army. I would press on the Government the desirability of considering this question. There is one other

great difficulty connected with this enormous force, and that is the difficulty of making it coherent and united. In the Navy you have a different kind of unit. You have a ship complete in itself, and the commander is responsible for it, and accustomed to work on his own responsibility. The men we are voting to-night are really in small units; units of battalions, regiments and batteries, and in order to make them a mobile force they must be united under one commander. Therefore in all questions connected with making this large force efficient the necessity for combining all the smaller units by means of constant inspections throughout the country should be borne in mind, and if this cannot be done by the headquarters staff then it must be done by the commanders of the districts, and they must be regarded as absolutely responsible for the efficiency of the troops under their command. At the present time the General Staff is divided into a number of different districts, each equal to the others, though we have some tiny districts like the Thames and Woolwich, and some very large ones like the North-Eastern and the North-Western districts. This is the old-fashioned organisation, and if the Government want to make the Army really efficient they must go down to the very root of the matter and must look into the organisation of the General Staff. I must protest against the system which exists at the present time, by which a great official, such as the Quartermaster-General, at the very time when the Army is mobilising and when he is most wanted at the War Office to superintend the preparations for sending the troops abroad, is taken away and sent to a command in South Africa. Not only has that been done, but the officer in charge of the mobilisation Department has also been sent away from the War Office to do duty in South Africa. It is not a new system, but I say it is an absolutely false one. If these great military officers are appointed to the War Office at large pay, surely the time of war, when all is confusion arising from the mobilisation and the sending out of an unexampled force, is the time when they are most wanted in their Departments. I do hope and trust that in future an absolute rule will be laid down that a staff officer who accepts any of these appointments at home accepts it on the understanding that he shall not, in

Col. Welby.

case of war, be detached from it. Much has been said about the short service system. I am quite in agreement that it is possible to make an infantry soldier efficient in three years, but it should be understood that the whole of that time is devoted to military training. I do not think that anyone acquainted with our camps and garrison towns will deny that the number of men detached from military duties for fatigue work—a work which the men hate more than any other work—is very great. In cavalry regiments the fatigue work is always done by paid men, and I do not see why something of the kind should not be extended to the infantry regiments. To detach men from their regiment is all very well if they have enlisted for their whole lives or for twenty-one years; such men could be sent on all kinds of duties. I have known a cavalryman attached to the general staff sent from Dublin to Kigstow to fetch a parasol which the general's daughter had left there. We must look deeply into all these questions, and we must insist that during the three years' service the men are absolutely confined to military training. I know to a certain extent that would interfere with the technical training of the men for teaching them trades, but if you meet their convenience by shortening their service, we must put all other questions aside and make military training the first and foremost duty the men have to look to. I should like to ask the Under Secretary for War whether he would say what preparation is being made to replace the heavy losses of horses and mules in South Africa. I am afraid the cavalry who were shut up in Ladysmith must be very short of horses, partly because of the casualties, and also because they had to be eaten. I met an officer recently who was invalided home, and he told me that the horses have suffered in a very peculiar way. So hot, dusty and dry has the veldt been that it has affected the hoofs of these horses, and I am told there is the greatest difficulty in keeping them shod. In many cases the hoof has broken in two, and under such circumstances the horse has become absolutely useless, and has had to be destroyed. In the brilliant work done by General French the wear of the horses must have been very great, and a great number of them will have to be replaced, and I think it would be interesting to know what steps the War Office are taking in the

matter. I may mention that I have heard that though ample stores had been collected the horses only got 8lbs. of oats and 8lbs. of hay. That may be sufficient for Cape ponies, but I do not think it is sufficient for our large English horses. I do hope that the Under Secretary for War will see his way to putting the battalions of Militia to be called out this year into brigades in order to give them something more than regimental training. I would suggest to my hon. friend whether it would not be possible with such a large force of Militia to carry out some such scheme as a supposed invasion of this country or the defence of London on a large scale. I was very glad to learn that there is a commencement of a breaking down of the wall of separation between the Regular troops and the Auxiliary forces. I think we have suffered too much from that in the past. We have been in the habit of looking down on the Auxiliary forces. We have quite enough men if they were only united and organised, and if the wall of separation between the Regular troops and the Militia and Volunteers were broken down. If that is to be one of the results of the war, as I believe it will be, a great deal will be done for the defence of this country. I hope and trust that some announcement will be given to the country that the Government intend to go thoroughly and deeply into all these different questions, and that they will not rest, whatever be the difficulties with which they may meet, until the Army system is as efficient as it is possible to have it.

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): In the Under Secretary's speech yesterday he stated that he could not answer questions with the Speaker in the Chair. It is, however, the custom to have a general discussion on Vote A, and I understood at the time that was the hon. Gentleman's intention. I am afraid, Sir, after your ruling, that some of the matters which I desire to bring before the Committee would be out of order. With reference to the commissariat in South Africa, I understand that although everything had been provided along the railway it was until Lord Kitchener went out most deficient in not being able to move any distance from the railway line, and that on several occasions in consequence of the inability of the commissariat

to move from it our generals were practically tied to the railway. That at any rate is the impression all over the country, and I trust there will be some explanation of it. In the accounts I do not see any amount for bringing the troops home. There is no estimate for paying the troops for a whole year, and yet there is no estimate for bringing them home. I think that is rather a misleading statement and that there must be a further Vote.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That question ought to be raised on the Vote for transport.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): On a point of order, Sir, has it not been the general practice on Vote A to permit a general discussion on the statement of the Under Secretary of State, and is it not a fact that the hon. Gentleman last night, before the Speaker left the Chair, stated that he would reply to the many questions asked him on this Vote?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I have no knowledge of what the hon. Gentleman says occurred when the House was sitting. All I can take cognisance of is what occurs in Committee of Supply. Committee of Supply is not cognisant of what is done in the House any more than the House is cognisant of what is done in Committee of Supply. With regard to the practice, the discussion is general in this sense, that anything may be discussed upon the first Vote which cannot be properly discussed on any of the other Votes; but if there is a special Vote for a particular matter that is the proper place to discuss that particular matter. There may be certain matters which may not be found in particular Votes, and the proper time to discuss them is on the first Vote.

MR. BUCHANAN: May we not on this Vote discuss the general statement laid before us last night?

*THE CHAIRMAN: Anything connected with the men may be discussed; but, for instance, the question of rifle-ranges cannot be raised in this Vote. Anything relevant to the number of men to be voted for the British Army would, of course, be relevant to this Vote, and in addition a general discussion in the sense I have just indicated.

MR. WARNER: I, of course, bow to your ruling, Sir; but if we got a satisfactory answer to questions on this Vote it would not be necessary to put down reductions later on, which would mean that all the Votes would have to be discussed in detail. It will make the discussion exceedingly difficult, not only for Members, but I am afraid also for the Under Secretary of State. I think old Members will bear me out when I say that this is quite a new ruling, although it is absolutely within the law.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I must really remind the hon. Member that this is not a new ruling, but a very old ruling. An unfortunate habit has recently grown up of discussing on the first Vote of Supply matters which ought properly to be discussed when the Speaker is in the chair. That has occurred on one or two occasions, and I have protested against it. I remember on one occasion when there was a so-called arrangement entered into that a certain discussion should be taken, I distinctly disallowed it on the ground that it was contrary to the rules which govern procedure in Committee of Supply.

MR. WARNER: I quite recognise that the law is as stated, but it will be very inconvenient generally. Now I come to a matter which is within the Vote for the men, and that is the permanent increases. I observe that according to the Estimates there is to be no permanent increase in the medical service, the Militia, the Yeomanry cavalry, or the Volunteers, yet from the Under Secretary's statement it would appear that there is to be a permanent increase in all these. I understand that the medical service is to be put on a better footing, which will entail a permanent increase year by year. The Yeomanry are to be put in a different position, the bounty to the Militia is to be permanently increased, and the grants to Volunteers are to be also permanently increased. I should like to know whether these increases should not have been included in the permanent increases. I also wish to know whether the Royal Reserves are to be used for the forty-three new battalions which are to be raised. A considerable number of Royal Reserve men will be used in connection with them, and I should like to know what proportion of men will be trained

for permanent work with the new batteries. They will require a very considerable number of men, and I wish to know what arrangements will be made for their permanent working. I do not think these batteries will be a sufficient reserve of artillery, because the artillery has been short and is short, and the proportion of artillery to infantry will not be brought up to anything like the proper standard. With reference to the cavalry regiments, I wish to know, if the Reserve squadrons are to be turned into service squadrons, are officers to be also provided, in order that they may be made real regiments instead of paper regiments? With reference to the question of Militia depôts, I am very sorry that absolutely nothing has been done towards amalgamating some of the small depôts, where idleness is so prevalent and work so rare. I do hope something will shortly be done in this direction. In the small depôts the permanent staff is kept for a certain period of the year doing absolutely nothing, whereas they might be doing the real work of a depôt staff, if the department were put more under the control of the Militia officer, or the Militia more under the control of the depôt officer. If several of the smaller depôts were amalgamated it would save a great deal to the country, and the work would be carried out much better. Moreover, it would be a very simple thing to do.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): I quite agree with my hon. friend in praising the most eloquent speech delivered the other night by the Under Secretary for War. I also agree with him in regard to the disastrous influences which come over any Member of this House who has to do with the War Office, although my hon. and gallant friend knows more than I do on that subject, for I believe he has a relation long connected with the War Office. The Under Secretary entered the War Office, and with military enthusiasm thought he would have some influence in altering the course which had been pursued by the Department. But unfortunately the War Office has been too strong for him, as for so many others, and I am sorry to say that he holds out no prospect of any reform in that Department. [HON. MEMBERS: No.] I do not think he holds out any prospects of those reforms which he referred to as desirable in July last.

We have listened to many eloquent speeches from the Under Secretary, but they do not seem to be convincing. I do not know why. It is, I suppose, because the War Office case is not a good one, although the Department appear to be able to get the most eloquent advocates to state their case in this House. I remember a speech made by the Under Secretary in the House in regard to the Guards. We were told that the change would not only be a good one, but would very much improve the condition of the Guards. I am sorry to say the critics on that occasion were right, and the Under Secretary was wrong. For what have we secured? The second battalion of the Grenadier Guards were ordered to Gibraltar, and afterwards, instead of being sent on to the Cape, as we all understood would be the case, they were despatched back to England. Now, one of the chief reasons for the change of service of the Guards was that by the service at Gibraltar they would be rendered more efficient, and able to go on any expedition. The hon. Member for West Belfast said that no organised units had left these shores for ten days after the declaration of war. I cannot help thinking that, if the Guards had been left in the condition they were in before the change, we should have had some chance of some organised units being despatched to the Cape at once. I had hoped that the Under Secretary would have indicated some scheme of having a few regiments of infantry ready for despatch and to take the field at a moment's notice, without calling on the Reserves. Some of the difficulties we have had in this war have arisen from the fact that we could not send out any artillery or cavalry without calling on the Reserves. Now in this matter we differ very considerably from Continental nations, such as France and Germany, which always keep a certain portion of their cavalry and artillery up to war strength. It would appear we have to get back to the colours the Reserves before we can send our cavalry or artillery to the front. I may remind the Committee that one reason for the inability of Lord Methuen to advance after a successful engagement was that the artillery and cavalry did not arrive in time. That was not so much owing to the lack of transport, but that we could not send them out in an efficient condition. I would like to

direct the attention of the Under Secretary to the question of the organisation of our cavalry. I may remind the Committee that in this country our squadrons are smaller in the number of men and horses than the squadrons of any other nation. Our war strength of squadrons comprises only 134 mounted men, whereas in France and Germany the squadrons consist of 149 and 150 mounted men respectively. The difference does not seem particularly great, but when it is remembered that these nations put four squadrons in the field as a regiment, and we only put three, then the difference becomes more marked. Further, when we consider that our regimental full strength is 407 men and horses, as against 668 in Germany, and 935 in Austria, and 995 in France, then I think a clear case has been made out for doing something to increase the strength of our cavalry per regiment. I hoped to see something done in that respect, but I cannot find in the Army Estimates any indication of a change of any kind or description that is going to be made. I cannot see how the emergency proposals can be carried out. We have been told that the reserve squadrons of every cavalry regiment that has gone to the front would be now made into service squadrons. I cannot see how a reserve squadron, composed almost entirely of recruits, with very few officers, and these very young, can possibly be made into a service squadron, and at the same time provide drafts for the regiment at the front. I had hoped that the Government would have proposed a permanent addition to the cavalry forces, and I am sorry that they should have attempted, if I may venture to say so, to throw dust into the eyes of the British subjects that they had created four more cavalry regiments. I see that the new squadrons of the Household Cavalry are not to have any new officers, there is simply to be an addition to the number of the men. I would remind the Financial War Secretary that something ought to be done to supply a much larger number of officers in the cavalry. At the present moment there is a very real and serious deficiency in the supply of such officers. I know some hon. Gentlemen have put that down to the fact of the expense of living in cavalry regiments. When we look abroad we see that the German Emperor issued an edict about the ex-

penses to which cavalry officers are put, but in spite of that very little could be done to keep these expenses down. I ask the Government to see whether something could not be done to change the leave system. That may seem a trifle, but I can assure the Under Secretary for War that that is one of the main factors which deters men from joining the cavalry. They used to get two and a-half months leave straight on end. That may seem too much; but what the officers chiefly object to is that three weeks are taken away from them in the middle of their leave, and they cannot settle down in any one place. I would suggest that the leave should be cut down, and that the system of breaking the leave in the middle should be abolished. I consider that the most interesting portion of the speech of the Under Secretary was that dealing with the employment of troops composed of natives of British India for service in Mauritius. That is an entirely new departure in our military history. I venture to ask the Under Secretary whether the two battalions recruited in India, and paid for by the Government, will be permanently stationed in Mauritius, or whether they will be interchangeable with other battalions of the Indian army. Then I call the attention of the hon. Gentleman to the fact that the number of officers with these battalions is only eight per regiment. In this connection it is worth while that the Government should remember what Lord Roberts said as regards the number of officers and the efficiency of native regiments. The Field Marshal said that the officering of native regiments was one of the most important questions the Government had to deal with. His words were—

"The officering of native regiments, nine to a cavalry, and eight to an infantry regiment, may be sufficient in time of peace; but that number is quite too small to stand the strain of war. Indian soldiers, like soldiers of every nationality, require to be led; and history and experience teach us that Eastern races (fortunately for us), however brave and accustomed to war, do not possess the qualities that go to make leaders of men, and that native officers in this respect can never take the place of British officers. It is, therefore, most unwise to allow native regiments to enter upon a war with a much smaller proportion of British officers than is considered necessary for European regiments. I have no doubt whatever of the fighting powers of our best Indian troops; I thoroughly appreciate their soldierly qualities; brigaded with British troops I would be proud to lead them against any European enemy; but we cannot

Capt. Jessel.

expect them to do with less leading than our own soldiers require; and it is, I maintain, trying them too highly to send them into action with the present establishment of British officers."

Lord Roberts adds—

"During the Mutiny the casualties among the British officers with the Sixth Punjab Regiment, which saw the most fighting, amounted to 60 per cent."

Well, when we come to consider that in a cavalry regiment at home the number of officers is twenty-three, on service twenty-six, and in India twenty-nine; and in the infantry regiments at home twenty-four, in the colonies twenty-eight, and in India twenty-nine, I think the number for the Mauritius battalions is too small. It may be said that the Soudanese regiments are in the same condition; but I do not suppose that these regiments are intended to fight against any but Soudanese. The West African regiment has thirty-nine officers, the West Indian regiment forty-one officers, and the Chinese regiment twenty-eight officers per battalion. Last, but not least, the British Central African regiment stationed in Mauritius has only nineteen officers per battalion. I hope the Government will consider this point, and also that the number of officers in the Indian regiments should be increased. Another subject to which I wish to draw the attention of the Financial Secretary is with what rifle these native regiments are going to be armed. It may not be known that at present they are armed with the Martini-Henry single loader rifle, while our own troops are armed with the magazine rifle, and the troops with whom they may be called upon to fight are armed with the very best rifles that money can buy. I trust that fact will be taken into consideration. Turning to the Volunteers and the emergency proposals, I am sure that these proposals, especially as modified to-night by the Under Secretary for War, will be gladly welcomed. I have three gallant regiments of Volunteers in my own constituency, and from what I have heard from them, the Government will this year be easily able to get the men to camp for fourteen days. Another part of these proposals will be cordially accepted, namely that the Volunteers and the Militia are to have a Deputy Adjutant General. One omission I noticed in the

speech of the Under Secretary, and that was, he made no mention of the Yeomanry. Now I hold that the Yeomanry are entitled to a great deal of the praise that has been given to both the Volunteers and the Militia; and I think it is a pity that the Under Secretary did not take the opportunity of recognising the good work that they have performed. But I would like to know whether the Deputy Adjutant General appointed for the Volunteers or the Deputy Adjutant General for the Militia is to look after the Yeomanry, or whether a Deputy Adjutant General is to be appointed for the Yeomanry alone. Now I come to the question of the permanent staff of the Auxiliary forces. The fact is that at the present moment both the Volunteers and the Militia have lost part of their permanent staff. In one regiment that I know of, no fewer than three of the permanent staff have gone to the front; and in another, two including the adjutant, have been taken away. Now, the Yeomanry and the Volunteers have been asked to go out in training for a longer period, and invited to recruit up to their full strength; and it is very hard on them that no provision is made to fill up the vacancies on the permanent staff. Everybody knows the difficulty of getting hold of good men to instruct young recruits. Is it too much to ask the Government to detach some non-commissioned officers from the Regular Army, for the purposes of instructing the new recruits in the Volunteer and Militia regiments? I can assure the Under Secretary that this point is occasioning great consternation in the minds of commanding officers. Another point to which I wish to direct attention is the appointment to commissions in the Militia. The right hon. gentleman the Member for East Manchester, who is Chairman of the Service Members Committee, alluded to boys in public schools being appointed to direct commissions above the heads of men who had qualified in other respects, and who are serving at the front. I hope some care will be taken in the allotment of these commissions. Only the other day I heard from an officer who has a son serving at the front, that his son had taken part in two engagements, and had been well reported on by his colonel. A death vacancy occurred, and a general was appointed from the Militia from home direct into the regiment, and the

young officer serving at the front loses his seniority. I know that these appointments lie with the Commander-in-Chief, but I trust that in the case of young officers who went out to the front in the first instance, inquiry will be made so that their claims will not be prejudiced. There is another question, that of the Royal Reserve Battalions. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for War in making his statement on the Supplementary Estimates told us that the Reservists were to be called back and asked to volunteer in the Reserve battalions, and that these were men who had done their twelve years service. He said—

“We shall allow men to come back, although they have served their twelve years. In that case we shall allow them to serve on for pension.”

The other day I asked a question whether these men were to be allowed so to serve, and I was informed that that was not the case—that they were only to be allowed to serve one year, and not to serve on for pension. I venture to think that it would be wise to induce some of these men to serve on for pension. I can assure the Financial War Secretary that this point is one which has been much inquired after by the men affected, and that a favourable answer from him would be much appreciated.

*MR. BUCHANAN said he did not wish to repeat the questions which he had put to the Under Secretary on the previous day, and in reply to which he had not obtained all the information he desired. He found that the statements he had made on the previous day were under rather than over the mark. What he complained of was that the Estimates submitted to the House did not fully show anything like the liabilities the country would have to meet in consequence of the large increase in the forces. The full truth was not revealed to the Committee. There were certain branches of expenditure consequential on the increase in the number of the forces which implied a small initial Vote this year, but which would involve great future expenditure; and in order to be frank and fair with the House the Under Secretary ought to have given them what would be the total liability to the country when the scheme came into full operation. The increased

number of men on the permanent establishment was 27,500, and he complained that no provision had been made for their barrack accommodation. He desired to know whether the Government intended to introduce a new Barracks Loan Bill, and if so whether it was to be done during the present year, and what the cost would be. According to the figures given by the Under Secretary of £120 per man, it would be three millions and a quarter, which was a very large amount. Under the head of the Vote for men there was an item under the head of Colonial Corps, part of which consisted of the colonial contingents now serving in South Africa. The remarks made by the Under Secretary rather pointed to the conclusion that the Government really intended in the future to organise a permanent force of these colonial contingents. Under those circumstances it was desirable that some explanation should be given as to the conditions under which they had been engaged, and whether they had been invited to undertake the extra work of garrisoning South Africa after the war had been brought to a conclusion, which seemed to be indicated by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. It had been suggested that when the war was over some of the colonial troops would be transferred to the service of the Chartered Company, who would use them for policing the conquered country. He hoped a categorical denial would be given to that suggestion. He could hardly imagine anything more unwise than to get a contingent from one self-governing colony to undertake such a duty in another, and in his opinion such a course would tend, more than anything else, to the disunion of the Empire. Apart from the colonial troops furnished for the purposes of the war in South Africa, he noticed on the Vote a considerable number of men voted under the head of Colonial Corps, and he found on looking back that that number was continually increasing. When the Government came into office these forces practically consisted of the Royal Malta Artillery, and other Artillery forces, and the infantry which came under the category was represented by two battalions of the West India Regiment, and one regiment at Hong Kong. From the time the Government entered office they had been constantly added to. The right hon. Gentleman denied that the recent increase was

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due to Imperial expansion, but he had omitted to notice the fact that the increase of these corps had only taken place during the last few years. He deprecated the practice of charging the British Estimates with the cost of forces not British in character, and charged the Government with the responsibility of so doing. This practice, which had been adopted by the Government to an extent never before contemplated, in his opinion was most dangerous. For increasing colonial garrisons the aggressive and expansive policy of the Government was clearly responsible. He asked whether the Indian regiments were to be taken for the general reinforcement of the military resources of the Empire. Could they be sent anywhere? Were they to be absolutely at the disposal of the military authorities? It was important the Committee should understand what were the conditions under which the Indian Government had agreed to part with two of its native regiments.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.) remarked that it was not a question of the Indian Government parting with any existing regiments. New regiments were raised to replace those taken for service in Mauritius. Whether they would ever be asked to volunteer for service elsewhere if occasion arose was more than he could say.

*MR. BUCHANAN: I do not know that that agrees with what was said last night by the Under Secretary.

*MR. J. POWELL - WILLIAMS: If it does not, I am wrong.

*MR. BUCHANAN: Are the Government going to take two of the native regiments that at present exist?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: No.

*MR. BUCHANAN: Are they going to recruit two native regiments in India and take them to Mauritius?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: No.

*MR. BUCHANAN said he certainly gathered that the Government intended to take from India two regiments for service in the Mauritius.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS pointed out that that was a question of the future; the immediate intention was to recruit two new regiments.

*MR. BUCHANAN thought that if two regiments were wanted for Mauritius in the present emergency the authorities would have taken two trained regiments, but what had just been said showed the extreme necessity for some further explanation on the subject. There was the further question of pay to be considered. Did the Government propose to pay the capitation grant for each recruit? At the present moment we made the Indian Government pay not only all the expenses of the British troops in India, but compelled them to hire British soldiers from the War Office, at £7 10s. per head. The Home Government was now going to recruit soldiers in India, but he could not find the cost of that recruiting in the Estimates. Was it wise from a military point of view that there should be an independent recruiting authority in India recruiting against the Indian Government? Such a suggestion would only need to be mooted to be disclaimed. It was a very questionable departure from the military system of this country to go to India as a recruiting ground for the British Army, and the result so far as India was concerned would be that when the financial aspect was considered India, as she always did when financial relations were discussed between her and this country, would go to the wall. The large increase of colonial corps was justified by the Government on the ground of Imperial defence, and looked upon in that light India is our largest dependency. If India were lost Great Britain ceased to be a great military Power. At the present time India discharged the whole of her military obligations herself, and in fact did a great deal more than her duty in the way of Imperial defence, and now the Government intended to take a great number of her troops for service in other parts of the Empire. He hoped some further explanation would be forthcoming upon the points he had drawn to the attention of the House.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): In the first place I should like to follow the hon. Member for East Aberdeenshire in pressing one or two questions. In reference to the colonial native troops who

are to be used for employment outside India, it would be interesting to know what the duties of those troops are, and what are to be the methods and places of their employment. There is considerable doubt felt as to what the proposals of the Government in regard to the permanent additions to our forces really mean. As far as I can make out the scheme of the Government does not go much further, except in some particulars which I will mention, than that outlined by Mr. Stanhope in 1888. In many respects it is the corollary and consequence of the steps then taken. In a memorandum attached to the Estimates of 1887-8 it was pointed out that a general review of our available forces showed that with certain changes and additions they would be sufficient to provide men for all our home and colonial garrisons, and also to furnish two army corps of regular troops, together with a strong cavalry division, and the necessary troops to guard their line of communication, *i.e.* after providing for India and the Colonies. The two great deficiencies to be noted were in connection with our garrisons, and existed in the Garrison Artillery and in the Engineers. Therefore, if we take, as usual, the infantry as the guiding line of discussion, it remains true that Mr. Stanhope's ideal was two army corps of regular troops, with a strong cavalry division, and the necessary troops to guard their line of communication. The memorandum went on to say that the whole of the units necessary to complete this organisation were actually in existence in the year 1888, with the exception of some deficiencies in the departmental corps, which could, however, be rapidly filled up on an emergency. I need not labour that point, but I should like to compare that statement with the speech of the Under Secretary for War in February last.* Speaking of the mobile force necessary for home defence, he said—

“ We propose to aim at three army corps and three cavalry brigades. This has been our aim for the defence of this country ever since 1888, and I think we have shown that practically we have recently reached that standard, because we have sent out more than two army corps, and have in this country the other half of the third.”

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxviii, page 1271.

The Under Secretary then went on to point out what, of course, was true—that by far the more serious aspect of this depleting of the country of troops is not that 128,000 Regular soldiers have been sent to South Africa, but that the permanent plant of two army corps has been sent away. He then said—

“Our proposal is—and this is a permanent proposal—to raise at once the Artillery, the Army Service Corps, and the Engineers for two army corps. That is to say, we propose to raise at once thirty-six battalions of field artillery and seven battalions of horse artillery. Our scheme is this—that there should always be in this country at full war strength those permanent parts of an army corps which it is difficult to improve.”

Practically, then, as I understand it, the addition we are now making to the scheme at which he have been working for twelve years is that of the permanent increase of two army corps. As to the permanent increase of the Army, I understand the Government propose to add in this year 27,000 men, but it must not be forgotten that we are practically in the middle of another programme; we are in process of raising 25,000 men which were announced as the goal of the Government in this matter two years ago. It is very interesting to observe what has been done in regard to raising these men. In 1897 the Government put forward a programme adding to the military forces of the country 9,024 men. In the following year they extended that programme and announced their intention of adding 25,083 men to the Army. We have now the proposal to add another 27,000, so that there has been a progressive increase in the proposed additions, with the result that it is now the purpose of the Government to add a total of 52,626 men. How far has this purpose been carried out? The increase actually obtained on the 1st January, 1899, was 12,636 men, but from that number must be deducted 4,500 men in the first class Army Reserve, leaving a net increase after the scheme has been in operation for two years of 8,136 men. That is to say, on the 1st January, 1899, you had not succeeded in carrying out the first programme of 1897. According to my figures, we have still to raise, under the schemes of these three years, 43,490 men for the Regular Army. By the present scheme we have also to raise 76,000 men for the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers,

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to bring up the battalions which we want for home defence. Beyond that we have a number of cavalry required to bring up to war strength the cavalry regiments we have here on a peace strength. We want men to bring up to war strength the three Household regiments which are minus a squadron each, and we have to bring twelve reserve squadrons to service squadron strength in order to form the four regiments referred to by the hon. Gentleman. Then we have a fourth item in cavalry—namely, the troop apiece from each Yeomanry regiment, which implies that we have to fill up the vacancies in the Yeomanry. I am trying to arrive at an estimate of the effort the country has to make both in men and in money to meet the demands of the Government, and how far the scheme is likely to succeed. In reference to the addition of 76,000 men for the auxiliary forces, I should like to ask the same question as I have asked before: Why is the Under Secretary so sanguine? Besides this permanent increase there are also temporary demands. You are calling up the artillery Reservists. I cannot help thinking that in the future organisation the 200,000 men connected with the twelve Royal Reserve battalions might be a very valuable source upon which to draw when an increase of forces for home defence was required. What is this very large demand going to cost? The hon. Member for East Aberdeenshire calculated the cost of barracks for 25,000 or 27,000 men, but it is going to be more than that. There will be barracks for 40,000 men, and if you are going to do something to attract a superior class of men, the cost will probably be much more than the estimate of £120 per man. It means a capital expenditure of between £5,000,000 and £6,000,000 for barracks alone, apart from ranges, equipment, the initial cost of arms, the rearming of the Volunteer artillery, and the establishment of these forty-three battalions. It is just as well we should know what we are doing, because we seem to be drifting into responsibilities which we scarcely realise. Another very important question, apart from the cost, is, are you going to get the men? We have had most encouraging figures as to the results of recruiting lately. Both here and in another place the representative of the War Office has told us how month after month there has been a very generous

rally of recruits to the services. I may incidentally say here that it is very difficult to discuss these larger considerations in connection with the Army without having before us the report of the Inspector General of Recruiting. The whole question of whether or not this is a wise policy on the part of the Government depends on whether it is likely to be realised. How far does our experience of recent years justify us in the expectation that we should get all these men? In war time the enthusiasm and patriotism of the country runs high, and recruiting receives a great impulse, but what is it going to be when peace again reigns? There cannot be worse agents for recruiting than those men who will shortly return in such large numbers with the loss of a limb, or loss of health, or loss of capacity to earn a living. What has happened in previous years? Perhaps I may disregard the experience of the past four months, as it does not afford a normal standard. In 1897 the Government brought forward a proposal involving an addition of 9,000 men to the Army. By the 1st January, 1899, they had succeeded in getting 8,000. If it takes two years to raise 8,000, how long will it take to raise 40,000? It is a very serious responsibility for this House and for the country to accept the proposals made by the Government as the minimum consistent with the safety of the country, if at the same time the way cannot be clearly seen in the present proposals by which that minimum can be obtained. That seems to be the situation in which we stand. In all quarters of the House there is a certain amount of doubt as to whether the methods proposed by the Government will be successful in securing the end they have in view. Various expedients have been proposed, and I rather regret that some of them have not received more serious consideration. There is the question so often raised by the hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth as to the employment of marines in the place of military forces.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The hon. Member is aware that the War Office has no power over the marines.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: Certainly. I am only pointing out that that expedient,

if carried out, would have the effect of releasing some battalions from the colonial roster, and of relaxing in some measure the strain at present put upon our Army system owing to the number of battalions we have to keep abroad. If you are going to give the present system of invitation a real chance you must increase the present inducements. The old inducements are not sufficient. In the first place, we must contemplate increased pay. I do not think it necessary that the initial pay should be increased, because at the age at which men enter the Army they do not consider the question of pay so much as at a later period of life. But it might be worth consideration whether the pay in later years should not be increased, and whether, as an incentive to join and as a reward for good conduct, you should not make the good conduct badges not only more valuable but more frequent. Another inducement which is necessary, if you are going to add to the attractiveness of the Army, is that you should add to the number of married men in a regiment. Our system is not so comfortable as in foreign armies, the study of which suggests that the proportion of married men in our regiments is not very great, and it is worthy of consideration whether the increase of that proportion to each regiment would not be an inducement to recruiting. I need not say a word about the elasticity of the service, for we seem to be making progress in that respect. There is one other matter that has been suggested to me by more than one officer, and that is, that the service, as a whole, rather lacks a career for the best class of non-commissioned officers. It might be possible to increase the number of warrant officers throughout the service. Possibly, then, the senior sergeant-majors and the various leading non-commissioned officers who are now senior non-commissioned officers would be able to work up to the rank of warrant officers, and so you would open a career which would be of great value to the Army. Perhaps I may be allowed to say a word about the idea that there should be some training in civil life. I feel that it might be possible to facilitate and regulate the transfer of men from the colours into civil life, and to make the channel between the civil population and the Army more open. This could be done by some condition on leaving the service that when-

ever a man had done his drills and become a trained and competent soldier he should be allowed to go to civil life and be a soldier on whom you can call when required. Then there is another point, and that is what is the increase of our Army due to ? The Secretary of State for War in his Memorandum has said that our growing Imperial responsibilities are the immediate cause of the present increase. That is perfectly true, but we must define what we mean by growing Imperial responsibilities. I suppose it would be equally true of the Navy to say that the great increase there was due to the same cause. Even in the present scheme the Under Secretary admitted that in providing fifty-two battalions for India and thirty-nine battalions for the colonies, making a total of ninety-one battalions, even then you have not the full number to keep up the balance of battalions at home and abroad.

MR. WYNDHAM : The figures I used were fifty-two battalions for India, three for Egypt, seventeen for all the colonial stations including Gibraltar, and we now propose twelve for South Africa ; that makes eighty-four, and deducting the three battalions of Guards leaves the total at eighty-one.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR : But you do not get the 162 battalions, which is the multiple arrived at considering the number of battalions at home and abroad. I do not blame the Government for not having gone the whole length of 162 battalions, but I am pointing out with all our great efforts we do not arrive at the result which we want to attain. What is it that causes this increase in our military responsibility and the demands made upon it ? Your colonial garrisons number fifty-nine battalions, but in the year 1888 they only numbered 29,000 men. When I speak of the colonial forces I am referring not to the Queen's battalions sent abroad, but to the various local forces raised in various parts of the Empire, and put on the Estimates under Foreign and Colonial Forces on page 11 of the Army Estimates. This great increase is supposed to be due to the great increase of our responsibilities in Africa, Asia, and different parts of the world. The First Lord of the Treasury says it is not due to the extension of our Empire in Africa and Asia, and that it has been

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rendered necessary not by the foreign policy of the Government, but by the naval and military policy of other countries. That is very important, and I believe it is a very true statement, because it must be seen on the Estimates that so far as it goes the forces which have been called into being by our colonial expansion in Africa and Asia consist not of forces of the regular Army, but very largely of those colonial forces which are not in the Army Estimates, and also of the forces under the Colonial and the Foreign Office, which, put altogether, form a very respectable army. When we come to other portions of the right hon. Gentleman's statement I must confess that I am obliged to differ. It is perfectly plain that whatever may have been the naval and military policy of other countries, the naval policy of this country has had some influence in encouraging, if not actually leading the way for, an increase in the naval expenditure of other countries. I am afraid that may be the case with these Army Estimates, and if the country does not watch closely the increase in the expenditure on the part of the Army we may be led into the same danger. It used to be said that an increase in the Navy had nothing whatever to do with the Army, but whenever an increase takes place in the Navy an increase in the Army generally takes place with it. If this great increase in our military expenditure is not due to colonial expansion, it is due to our relations with other Powers. If we choose to cultivate a friendly policy and make it our aim and object to cultivate friendly relations with other Powers, that affords the only hope of moderating the naval and military expenditure of the country. There is an idea abroad that we and other countries must go to large territories and keep them as preserves for our trade. Everyone knows that that was the first idea of colonies, but it has long ago been exploded. I venture to lay emphasis upon the fact that the alternative and only method of checking an increase in our naval and military expenditure is to adopt a persistent and magnanimous policy which will preserve equanimity and magnanimity between those great Powers which compete with us in armaments. It is difficult to discuss these questions in view of the present South African entanglement. Upon this question it is difficult to dissociate one's opinions,

because we are all standing shoulder to shoulder to get the country out of the present difficulty. The Under Secretary for War tells us that on this side we have no middle course between denouncing the war and co-operating cordially with the Government in the permanent proposals which they put forward, but I venture to differ from that statement. I do not believe that the policy of the present Government has tended to reduce the necessity for armaments, and I do believe that if a proper, friendly, and self-controlled policy on the part of this country—which ought to be mindful of the aspirations of other people as well as our own—had been cultivated, and the country had been helped to adopt that policy, and public opinion educated in that direction, we should have gone a great way in the direction of avoiding what I believe to be a real danger in the future, and that is that without studying these questions and without going into them carefully we should be forced by an ill-informed public opinion to increase very largely our Army Estimates. It is well known that, upon this matter, there is a very powerful public opinion outside. If the Government have had abuse it has not been from this side of the House, but it has come from those outside who are usually the supporters of the present Government. Those are the people who have been disappointed because the Government have not adopted more extreme measures and resorted to compulsory schemes. In *The Times* to-day there is a repetition and reiteration of a proposal that we should have an Army League to hasten and bustle the public opinion of the country at a time when it cannot be said to be normal, and through the circumstances connected with this war compel the Government to adopt proposals of very great magnitude. I am extremely grateful to the House for allowing me to speak so long. I know it is too late to object to these increases now that we are deeply committed to them, but I raise my voice, humble though it be, in order to urge greater vigilance and more close examination of the proposals of the Government, and to repeat that, so far as the present war is concerned, I am at one with the Government in wanting to get it over and carried out to its final conclusion. I trace this increased expenditure not only to increased responsibilities abroad, but also to

the policy which the Government has pursued ever since it came into office.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington): The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite has given us to-night, as he generally does, a somewhat interesting address. In the long address he has just delivered he has discussed the general policy of the Government, but he does not seem to recognise the fact that this country is now at war, and that what we care about in voting these Estimates is that we should have a thoroughly efficient army in South Africa and also an efficient force for home defence. Instead of discussing this the hon. and gallant Member has gone more into questions affecting the general policy of the country.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: I do not know whether the hon. Member was here during the whole of my speech.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: Yes, I was.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: I stated distinctly that I wished to confine myself to the permanent increase in the Estimates.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: The hon. and gallant Member's speech from beginning to end referred to the general policy, but I wish to refer to the war policy, for I know the people do not care at present about the policy raised in the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member opposite. The people of this country want to see our troops beat the Boers, and they also want a good army for home defence. We are asked to vote a very large number of men, and in that you have two new factors; one is the colonial army and the other the Royal Reserves. Amongst the remarks made by my hon. friend the Under Secretary of State for War last night, the remark he made about our colonial forces was particularly interesting to me. There is no doubt that we have in our colonial forces a very great source of strength to rely upon in the future. I happen to know this force, for I spent two years in Australia, and I was an officer in the Victoria Militia. I know the stuff those men are composed of, and I know that their Militia and artillery are perfectly efficient and excellently trained. I hope the Committee will allow me to say that I have read with very great regret of the death of that

able officer Colonel Umphelby. I knew that gentleman when I was in Victoria, and I can say that a braver or a more enthusiastic soldier of the Queen never wore a uniform. With regard to this question of our colonial forces I must point out that it is one which requires to be handled with very great care. Although all our colonies are loyal they are all exceedingly jealous of interference with their local forces, and do not desire to be connected with any Imperial scheme or official red tape. Therefore, we should be very careful indeed how we try to bring them in as part of our military system. That will perhaps be one of the things which my right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary will be able to discuss with the Australian representatives when they come over here to discuss Imperial Federation. I listened to my hon. friend's speech last night, as I always do, with the greatest interest and attention, for he is always eloquent and amiable. I could not help thinking, however, that he was like the prophet Elijah, and I was like the young man, for my eyes were opened; but, unfortunately, when my hon. friend sat down that vision disappeared. Now, what are the actual requirements of the war at the present time? Two things are required. First of all we want a constant stream of drafts for our field force in South Africa; and, secondly, we require a mobile army for the defence of our country at home. I think when the Militia now embodied have gone out we shall then have quite sufficient units in South Africa. Our duty then will be to keep up a constant stream of drafts. To do this we have three forces. There are the recruits enlisted some twelve or eighteen months ago. Then there is Section D of the Army Reserves, and we have a certain number of men who are temporarily invalided for medical reasons, but who will be ready to go out again for duty in a short time. With these forces we should have no difficulty in raising 3,000 men every month as drafts for South Africa, which should be quite sufficient. I know that our losses at the commencement of the war were very heavy, but if we can keep up drafts of 3,000 men per month I think we shall do very well, and we cannot expect our losses to be in the future anything like so heavy as they have been during the past five months. With these drafts I think the Govern-

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ment will be able to keep up their strength in South Africa. Now to turn to the question of our army for home defence. I do not propose for a moment to deal with the permanent proposals of the War Office. My view is that it is ideal to reform your Army permanently until you begin at the top and reform your War Office. I simply refer to-night to the emergency proposals of the Government. I am no alarmist, and I do not believe even in the possibility of an invasion of this country, although a raid is quite possible. I believe in that possibility, because our Fleet might possibly in the future meet with a temporary check, which in these days of steam power would be far more serious than under the old conditions. Another reason why we should have an army for home defence is that the stronger we show ourselves at home the less we have to fear from complications abroad. I think it was announced in the Army Estimates that we have a force of 400,000 men at home. I do not believe in the argument that this is a stage army. There is an army of 400,000 men which we are supposed to have at home, and I look upon it not so much as a stage army, but as magic lantern army. What we do want is a really mobile force at home which we can use not to repel invasions, but to repel a raid. I do trust that the Government will seriously take into consideration the question of giving up this useless idea of locking up a number of Volunteers to defend the forts around London. If the forts around London are to be held by Volunteers when London is being invested, it will be then time to haul down our flag. My hon. and gallant friend earlier in the session talked in an eloquent way of our gallant troops who were going to guard the heart of the Empire. As regards the Royal Reserve battalions there is a certain amount of justice to be done to the old soldier. A great many old soldiers who have joined the Imperial Yeomanry and the Volunteers and gone abroad have not received a sixpence of bounty, but these men who have stayed at home and joined for garrison duty have received a bounty. That, I think, is a gross injustice. When these proposals were introduced three weeks ago my impression was that the old soldier who was called to the colours would have participated —

MR. WYNDHAM: They came back to serve for pension.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: The available number was, we were told, 170,000, and that the number expected to return was 45,000 or 50,000, and that the number that had returned was 17,000. The non-return of those who have not responded to the call is not due to any want of patriotism or loyalty, but is because they cannot afford it. A man with a family to support, who is in regular employment earning a salary of £1 or 25s. a week, cannot afford to throw it up. The bounty of £22 is too large and too small. It is too small to attract the best class of men—men who are in regular employment—and a smaller bounty would be sufficient to attract those who are engaged in casual labour. It is also a great mistake to form new Militia units. The second line which we have to fall back on for a mobile line in times of necessity is the Militia, and, as everybody knows, the condition of the Militia is deplorable. It is very well to take abroad battalions of Militia, but if you are going to embody them and depend upon them for national defence the proper thing would be to make a fresh battalion and to get Reserve men to join them. If old soldiers were tempted to join the Militia—if they were given a small bounty to join for a fortnight or a month's training, the Militia would be strengthened enormously. A small bounty of £4 or £5 might be given, and a great many old soldiers who could not leave their work for a longer period would train with the Militia for a fortnight and would make that body much more valuable as a mobile force in case of need. I think my suggestion is a feasible one. With regard to the suggestion to call out the Volunteers for a month's training annually, that in my opinion is fantastical to a degree. I have made inquiries of Volunteer colonels, and the universal opinion is that it is absolutely impossible. Neither employers of labour, officers, nor men could afford it. It is a strong demand to make on employers to grant Volunteers in their service a month's holiday in addition to paying war taxation, keeping their places open for Reserve men, and giving their wives half their wages.

I should suggest that, instead of having a month in camp, the Volunteers should have eight days in camp under military law and under Regular officers, and during the whole of that time should be kept at drill. Eight days of proper training under military law and Regular officers would do a great deal more good than the month's go-as-you-please that the Government proposes. All these schemes with regard to the Volunteers are in the hands of employers of labour, and the Government should endeavour to get the employers of labour on their side. If a man has a number of Volunteers in his service, it is obvious that his business must suffer while those men are away in camp, and that loss should be returned to him in some way. My suggestion is that as this is a temporary scheme, where an employer of labour can return half of his employees, between the ages of twenty and thirty, as efficient Volunteers, he should receive 50 per cent. abatement on his income tax, and I can assure my right hon. friend that if he adopts the eight days camp instead of the twenty-eight days camp, he would get back that money over and over again. I hope the emergency proposals of the Government will be a success, and that we shall have in this country a mobile force able to make our shores secure against invasion.

MR. WYNDHAM: My hon. and gallant friend who has just addressed the Committee has brought into the discussion a great deal of experience and of knowledge which he has accumulated during a distinguished career. Some of his suggestions are points we have considered and reluctantly set on one side. He touched on the colonial forces, and he has had some experience of them, and he paid a tribute to them. He went on to express a sentiment with which I absolutely agree, and which I myself tried to express last night—namely, that we must not dictate to the forces of our colonies, that we must not look to the forces of our colonies to help us in the daily routine work of our great Empire. It is true we are supporting the largest burden; but how little it is considering the extent of our wealth and considering the fact that this House, after all, does in the last degree,

through the Government of the day, advise the Sovereign, who is the single link, the one symbol of unity of the whole Empire. But let us be careful not to trade on that fact. Let us use that advantage with the utmost tact and the utmost discretion. Let us never use that power of advising the Crown through the Ministry of the day in such a manner as to lead the representative Assembly of any dependency of the Crown to think that we wish to interfere, by dictation or even by suggestion, in a matter so intimately within the province of their own discretion as the force which they elect to raise and pay in any one year. I said last night, and I say it again, that after what we have seen we may believe that, if any other emergency arises which puts a strain upon the actual and potential forces of the Empire as a whole, the colonies will do in the future what they have done during the last few months, and we may expect that they will put themselves in a position to act when they wish to act side by side with ourselves. Then the hon. and gallant Baronet referred, and I was glad to hear it, to the exigencies of the present time. He said we cared more about the war in South Africa than we did about War Office reform. That is quite true. Everybody knows that when the chief military officers of the War Office are working during the hours and under the pressure that they are working now, it is not the moment to discuss or consider War Office reform. My hon. and gallant friend said that when the Eighth Division had arrived in South Africa the total number of troops in South Africa would be about 208,000, and that we ought not to increase the number of units. I quite agree. He also touched upon the question of drafts. Unfortunately, I have not with me the total of the drafts up to the most recent date, but up to January 31st we had sent out to South Africa as drafts to the Regular troops 12,061 men. What has so often been lost sight of is that the losses have always been made good. Up to the end of January over 12,000 men had been sent out as drafts, and not as units to South Africa, and only 2,611 of them were drawn from the Militia Reserve. Therefore, the inroad made on the Militia Reserve is not nearly so large as has been supposed. If we can maintain that stream of drafts—and I know we can maintain it—it will be seen

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that a good deal that has been said inside this House and outside it about the Regular troops left in this country is very highly coloured and exaggerated. I never pretended that the 109,000 men left in the country—now 101,000—were in units. I have always told the House exactly how many units there are in this country, in India, and in the Colonies, and I cannot give that table every time the matter is referred to. When I say that there are seventeen battalions in this country I cover the whole ground, and it follows that the men left in the country are largely made up of recruits and Reservists; but, as far as there are any Regular regiments and Reservists left, those regiments and those Reservists are every bit as good as those who have proceeded to South Africa and covered themselves with glory. No one can say that the Eighth Division is one whit behind the First or the Second, or any of those which have gone out. Passing from the exigencies of the situation in South Africa, I follow my hon. and gallant friend to the question of home defence. He says we must have a mobile Army. I do not any longer pledge myself to my own view as to what is a mobile army. I take refuge in the fact that everyone says you ought to have it; but in discussing the question my hon. and gallant friend ran a tilt against the Royal Reserve battalions. A mobile army to be mobile must be made up of troops who are proficient soldiers, and, therefore, in a year when we have sent so many of the trained troops out of the country, it is right and proper in our judgment, as an emergency measure for one year, to draw on this large reserve of men who are thoroughly trained and efficient, and who have done some seven years with the colours. My hon. and gallant friend says, "Your proposal is either too large or too small"; too large because it may give umbrage to men who are serving in the Militia, and too small because the bounty will not compensate the men for giving up the wages they are earning. When I hear my hon. and gallant friend say that our proposal is both too large and too small, I think I may believe that, perhaps, we have found the real mean which is described by the epithet "golden." My hon. and gallant friend said that our proposal is unfair to the man who has been a soldier and is now serving in the Militia, but a moment afterwards he

suggests that we ought to have invited such men to join the Militia. But if you were to compensate them for that you would not only have an injustice but a flagrant injustice, for you would leave the Militiaman in his Militia pay and the Royal Reserve man drawing much larger emoluments falling in day by day next to him in the ranks. That very proposal when carefully considered was set on one side because it was thought better to make the Royal Reserve scheme a frankly emergency measure, standing alone for one year, and I think, on the whole, that that was the wisest course. My hon. and gallant friend also touched upon the question of the Volunteers—on that point I must appeal from him to my hon. friend the Member for the Lewes Division of Sussex, who has been for so many years intimately connected with the Volunteer movement, and when he comes forward and tells us that our scheme is a sound one I am, at any rate, inclined not to despair. I may tell my hon. and gallant friend that all the questions he has put to me may be answered in the affirmative. The Government will provide camps and rations and pay, and treat the Volunteers in every respect on the footing of the private soldier.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: Under military law?

MR. WYNDHAM: Well, I do not think you can put Volunteers under military law unless they are working side by side with Regular troops, but in this case they will be working side by side with Regular troops more often than not. The hon. Member for Forfar has spoken at some length, and he takes a gloomy view of things. He harps upon two things: the difficulty of getting men on the terms we now offer and the necessity of retrenchment in the Estimates. He asked why we do not use the marines. The marines are all required when the Fleet is mobile, and of all the crimes against the Navy that of robbing it of the marines would be the most warmly resented. The hon. Member used what I thought a very unfortunate expression in regard to the colonies, in comparing them to other uncivilised countries; but I will not pursue that. The hon. Member sug-

gested that we ought to have more married men in the Army. Again, I reply that that will not favourably affect the cause of retrenchment, because, as has been pointed out, one of the most important ultimate increases due to any increase in the Army is the increase in the charge for barracks, more especially in the charge for married quarters.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: I accepted the Government scheme, but I thought I had made suggestions which would have made the Army a little more attractive.

MR. WYNDHAM: Quite true. The truth is, recruiting is at the bottom of the whole difficulty. We have been working hardly and patiently at the problem of recruiting, and our recruiting has expanded during the last three years from 27,000 to 40,000. The recruiting this year, I admit, with the adventitious aid of the war excitement has leapt up to 70,000. Are we then to despair on the road we are pursuing with such results, and when we have only begun during the last three or four years to tackle this problem of recruiting in a thoroughly methodical manner? No; that is part of our task which is the most difficult, but it is the part from which we hope to achieve the greatest results and advantages in the long run; and it is the only field on which we can work. "You ought to vote the establishment needed for the Empire," said an hon. Member, "and then get the men."

MR. WARNER: What I said was that we had certain sections of the establishment which were not intended to be filled up at all.

MR. WYNDHAM: Well, I will not follow that up. My hon. and gallant friend the Member for Taunton mourned over the development of my characteristics, since I was an attached officer in his regiment, due to the pernicious influences of the War Office. He told us there was a upas tree in the War Office, the mephitic fumes of which paralysed the brains of all who came near, so that, however eager we may have been in earlier days for reform, from that moment not a word on the subject was heard from

us. Of course not. All that might be accepted without bringing in the upas tree and all those other allegorical appliances. The representative of the War Office cannot air his own ideas and fancies in the House. He cannot make the kind of speech delivered by the hon. and gallant Member for Forfar, for the Government would be accused of breach of faith if we did not set up forthwith barracks for married men. I can only indicate reforms and propound schemes which have been considered and decided upon, and for which the funds are provided in the Estimates. But I can assure my hon. and gallant friend that in hours of leisure my imagination plays over vast orbits which would satisfy even him. My hon. and gallant friend did make some suggestions of a practical character. A most valuable one was that we should diminish the amount of fatigue work placed on our soldiers in the Army. I quite agree with that, and we have taken some steps in that direction. The Committee will remember that in the Estimates of last year we took money for bringing back a certain number of reservists and pensioners to do such fatigue work in order to liberate the soldiers more to perform their proper military duties. I do not think we can press that reform too far. Then the hon. Gentleman criticised us on the score that certain members of the Headquarters Staff had proceeded to the theatre of war. That is a legitimate criticism, but I fail to see how the state of things of which he complains is to be avoided. It is one of the many cases in which the ideal conflicts with the practical in the management of our Army, and you have to make the best compromise you can. As to the question of remounts, I should hardly be justified in dealing with it fully, but in order to relieve apprehension I may say that we have sent about 12,000 remounts to the Cape in addition to the horses with the units, and that there are 8,000 more on their way. I do not think we need be anxious at all on that score, though, of course, on any one day, and in any one place, we may be short of horses for transport, or even for artillery. These are accidents that must at times overtake us when we are conducting military operations in a theatre of war about seven times as large as this kingdom. If I may pass a criticism on

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this matter I must say that I cannot admit that the absence of cavalry or deficiency of artillery at a particular place, or on a particular day, is to be charged to the War Office. In speaking on the Address I pointed out that certain provision was made, to mature at a certain date, but that, owing to accident or misfortune, or, if you like, mistake, these plans were altered, and that undoubtedly Lord Methuen found himself without a proper proportion of cavalry. But if this charge is to be pressed home it ought to have been pressed home in October last, when we stated the exact conditions of the force that was to be sent out. I do not think the right hon. Baronet will say that for the 47,000 men then contemplated eight regiments of cavalry was an inadequate complement. The plan which we made was properly proportioned, but it was not on a sufficiently large scale. The whole plan was deranged owing to several incidents, but the defect has been remedied, and both as to the proportion of cavalry and guns I am prepared to attempt to convince the right hon. Gentleman that our case is a fairly good one.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): What I stated with regard to the number of guns had reference to the statement made by the Leader of the House at Manchester.

MR. WYNDHAM: I do not think I will pursue that topic. It is hard enough to take up all the speeches made from day to day in the House and to conduct the ordinary work of my office without going into a defence of speeches delivered under very different circumstances three months ago. Of course I wish it to be understood that I have never said we had five guns for every thousand men under arms in South Africa, but that the forces in the fighting line would have five guns for every thousand. The number of field guns that we have in South Africa is 392. Reduce that and it gives you 78,400 men in the fighting line with field guns, and I do not believe that Lord Roberts and Sir Redvers Buller acting conjointly or separately could ever put more than 78,400 men in line in front of the enemy. Including semi-mobile and siege guns there are 479 guns in South Africa,

and Lord Roberts is satisfied with that total. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North-east Manchester has invited our attention to the steps we have taken in order to procure officers for the Army. His remarks have received and will receive the most careful consideration, but there are certain difficulties. We must get more officers for the Army, and the output, if I may so put it, of Sandhurst and of Woolwich is determined by their four walls. You have only one cadet for one room. You can increase the output by shortening the term, and that has been done. But a cadet could receive no military training at all unless he were retained there for one year, or at least for six months. Therefore we must go to other sources of supply. We hold that if a man, say of twenty-three years, has passed the examination at the university, or has now, under the great stress of the present circumstances, been selected by the Vice-Chancellor on his responsibility—we think that test gives us as good a qualification as we can find. That is really the whole matter; it is a question of demand and supply.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N. E.): I may remind my hon. friend of what I really did say. I pointed out that there were public schools which had no instructors and no cadets, and I said that it would be unfair to give the proposed new direct commissions in priority to men who had probably not undergone any military training in these schools.

MR. WYNDHAM: It might be that the men receiving commissions might have some other qualifications. A man might very well have failed two or three years ago in his examinations, and have gone into the Militia for military training; but, no doubt, some hard cases may arise. The Military Secretary, however, assures me that he has taken every care that in these particular cases every semblance of hardship and injustice should be avoided, and that candidates from schools or colleges should be widely distributed, so as to cause the least possible hardship. The difference is really so small that I think it ought not to be urged against us at a time like the present. I believe I have dealt with most of the topics raised on this Vote; and if hon. Members are

satisfied that I have endeavoured to meet them generally, I shall deal with any points that remain over when we come to discuss the hard practical details of each branch of the service.

*SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): I am anxious to obtain fuller information in regard to a subject to which I called attention on a former Vote, but was then informed it would be more regular on the Army Estimates. I allude to a statement which appeared in *The Times* with reference to a battalion of 800 natives which were taken from British Central Africa—a very low type of untutored savages, not even like the Zulus—and had been sent without their wives and families to Mauritius, which we may call a civilised country, the country of Paul and Virginia, and placed there in the position of a British regiment to perform ordinary garrison duties. Naturally the despatch of these savage men to Mauritius was taken by the inhabitants as an insult, and they were subjected to some persecution. When only a short time in the island they raided a village, wounded thirty-five men, committed theft, and outraged some women. *The Times* correspondent says that great disappointment was felt at the want of success of that experiment. I cannot understand how anyone who knew the nature of these men could express disappointment at the failure of the experiment. They are good enough men in their own country against Arab slave raiders or recalcitrant chiefs, if allowed to live in lines with their wives and families; but they are quite unfit to perform garrison duties in a civilised country. I am anxious to know what has become of that battalion. I understand that when the raid took place in Mauritius the men were interned in a quarantine island. That was a cruel punishment. I asked on a former occasion what had become of these men, and I was informed that they were returning to Africa. I naturally believed that they would be sent back to their own homes, but from the statement which accompanied the Army Estimates it appears that they are on their way to Somaliland. I wish to have some positive assurance from the Treasury Bench on

this subject that papers will be laid on the Table of the House, and that the Government will not again attempt, as they did in Mauritius, to play the game of Buffalo Bill on so large a scale. I hope that if these troops are really going to fight in Somaliland, great care will be taken to exercise full control over them, and not allow them to commit any such atrocities as had been committed in Mauritius. And, lastly, I hope that the Government will at the very first opportunity send these men to their own homes again.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am not an authority upon the character of the various tribes of Central Africa. It seems that this regiment has been taken away from Mauritius because the experiment of placing it there was, in the opinion of the War Office, a failure, and its place has been taken by two regular regiments of native infantry from the Indian Army. I feel bound to inform hon. Members that there is another side to this story, and that this regiment does not deserve to be held up to public odium by any means. For some time they were subjected to prolonged provocation; they were insulted, stoned, and goaded into reprisals. When the hon. Member says he hopes that in Somaliland, whither they have been despatched, they will be under proper control, we can say that we will take that care. No great care is needed on our part, because, although these men did break out, and the extent of the wrong they committed is a matter of doubt, the moment their officers appeared on the scene they fell in and returned to the path of duty. The men were subjected to severe punishment, but we believe that they will form a useful battalion in the forces of the Empire.

MR. BUCHANAN: The hon. Gentleman used the expression that these troops were under the War Office last year, but he does not say whether they were sent to Somaliland under the Foreign Office. I ask whether a report has been received from the commanding officer in Mauritius, and whether that report will be circulated or laid on the Table of the House.

MR. WYNDHAM: I will ask my hon. friend the Secretary of State for War if that can be done.

Sir Bampton Gurdon.

MR. BUCHANAN: These Central African troops have no uniform, and ought not to have been sent to the Mauritius. Will the hon. Gentleman tell us more particulars as to the engagement made between this Government and the Government of India with reference to the two native regiments? Are these regiments to be taken solely for Mauritius, or can they be sent to any other parts of the Empire?

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member is probably aware that for many years past the British Government have recruited a native battalion in India which has been stationed at Hong Kong. Some objections had been taken to that proceeding, or at any rate to extending it; for it is never a good plan to have two people competing against each other in the same market. We have felt, however, that in some garrisons, particularly those in hot climates, there is a field for the employment of these admirable Indian troops, side by side with the British battalions. In order to avoid competing in the recruiting market in India with the Indian Government we fell in with the wishes of the Government and accepted two regiments from their roster of native infantry, for which we pay them, leaving that Government to increase their force by two regiments. As to the term of years for which we take these two particular regiments, that is a subject for future arrangements. As I understand it these two regiments are not ear-marked, for others would be glad to follow in their steps.

MR. BUCHANAN: Are two extra regiments to be raised?

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member will see that there is an elaborate book-keeping arrangement between the two Governments, and we do our best not to rob each other.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I wish to ask why men are appointed to commissions without any training, whereas the students at Woolwich and Sandhurst, who have some training, have been passed over.

MR. WYNDHAM: How much further would my hon. and gallant friend consider such a system should be carried? Would he say that a man who had been two days at Sandhurst would have a right to selection?

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: My point is that a man with six months special training should be given preference over a man who has had no special training at all. My hon. friend solemnly warned the House how extremely cautious it ought to be in making suggestions with reference to the colonies and the military defence of the Empire. I have looked into the question for many years, and what more than anything else has blocked the *rapprochement* between the colonies and the mother country is the red tape and obtuseness of the War Office. I feel bound to say that the War Office is missing a great opportunity. They have a large number of Volunteers from the colonies fighting at the front, and yet in filling up the commissioned ranks they have not time to give a thought to these men. Instead, the War Office is writing to the heads of universities and public schools to find officers to foist into the Army, while men who are qualified for the positions and are fighting at the front are not given a thought. I should have thought that if commissions are to be given away, the proper people to write to are the generals commanding in South Africa. There are certain to be a number of recommendations from generals commanding as regards men who have shown themselves fitted for commissions, and then the War Office will say that they deeply regret that all the vacancies have been filled up. It is by want of such forethought that so much harm is done. I have a motion on the paper with reference to the garrisons of Wei-hai-wei and Esquimaux. My hon. friend can, however, stop me from discussing it if he states whether the present arrangements are to be accepted as the final decision of the Government.

MR. WYNDHAM: The only indication I can give my hon. and gallant friend is that since I dealt with this subject last year we have had so many other important matters to deal with that I believe

no one has given a thought to Wei-hai-wei during the last five months.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: You get millions of money, and yet you don't know how they are to be spent. Have the Government at all calculated the cost of the garrison at Wei-hai-wei, and have they arrived at the limit which that garrison should attain? When an hon. Gentleman referred to the coaling stations, my hon. friend got up and said, "Oh, the First Lord of the Admiralty will tell you about that." I want to know what is the policy of the Defence Committee. Have the Defence Committee been unable to give a thought as to the policy they will pursue with regard to garrisoning naval stations? My hon. friend evidently has no policy. Is the policy of the Defence Committee to throw upon the Army naval work and naval responsibilities?

MR. WYNDHAM: I said last night that there were seventeen British battalions in naval stations, and that is the policy.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: But there are no British battalions in these two places, only British artillery and engineers, and I want to know what the policy of the Government is. Are we to accept it as an emergency or a permanent arrangement that the Army should do naval work on naval stations? The greatest naval statesman England has had in modern years—Sir James Graham, who was twice First Lord of the Admiralty, once in peace and once during the Crimean War—has left it on record that the true policy of this country is that naval stations should be garrisoned by naval forces and not by military forces, and he spoke as a man of unique experience. We have now a new distribution of forces. We never before had a military force at Esquimaux. One hot night last July, I showed the very small way in which this new departure began and how it was manipulated, and I prophesied that if the War Office did not then and there check it there would be a considerable in-

crease in the Army Estimates. Last year there was no charge at all on the Imperial Votes for Esquimalt. For years we had Marine Artillery there and everybody was satisfied. There was a charge nominally on the Naval Votes, but the whole charge was repaid to the Admiralty by the Dominion Government. Now we have incurred a big military charge. That is the policy of the War Office, and it arises because under certain circumstances at the War Office a good deal more attention is paid to getting billets for friends than to bullets of the enemy. This matter began altogether by the desire of engineer officers to get to Esquimalt, and they finally succeeded, with the connivance of the War Office. I am quite satisfied that the Committee will see that my hon. friend shows the want of policy in these matters. He tried to get rid of discussing Wei-hai-wei altogether by the statement that he had not paid the slightest attention to it for many months. It is perfectly plain we have no policy in these matters. We are shifting responsibilities from the Army to the Navy, and back from the Navy to the Army, and both services suffer.

Resolution agreed to.

3 £15,200,000, Pay, etc., of the Army (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments).

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £555,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of the Medical Establishment, and for Medicines, etc., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

DR. TANNER (Cork County, Mid) said that the Vote had increased to an extent which was never expected, and there was consequently a certain amount of satisfaction in the medical schools throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. He recollected when the number of candidates for the Army Medical Service were three or four times as many as the present number, but recently there happened

to be more vacancies than candidates. The pay of civilian medical practitioners as recorded in the Vote was altogether in advance of anything that had been done before. He found now that the doctors in the Army, instead of being called doctors were called lieutenants and colonels and majors and all that sort of thing; but was that a satisfactory remedy for all the grievances under which the Royal Army Medical Corps suffered? If it were he should have thought that young men in the medical profession would more extensively patronise the Army than they did. He would wish to know exactly at what rate the civilian medical practitioners had been employed. There was an increase in the item for pay of £11,800, which was rather astonishing. Then there was an increase of £120,000 in the pay of civil medical practitioners. He thought they should not have those large estimates submitted to the Committee without some explanation. He should like to know how many civilian medical practitioners had been employed in connection with the war in South Africa. He for one would not be in favour of cutting down the pay of civilian medical men when they were absolutely required, as unfortunately they were required, at present, because, of course, medical men were always supposed to stand to each other. But still there should be some explanation of these large sums. He could not understand why the extra expenditure on medicines and instruments should be £50,000. He had learned from friends and acquaintances who had returned from South Africa that the best instruments there had been provided by private resources and not by the Government at all. He could not see where all that extra money had been spent.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow.

Committee also report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

Adjourned at five minutes after
Twelve of the clock.

Sir John Colomb.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 14th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BRAY AND ENNISKERRY RAILWAY BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

ST. DAVID'S RAILWAY (ABANDONMENT).

Report [13th March] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Phillips, General Laurie, and Mr. Randell.

PETITIONS.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Petition from London, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY (EXEMPTION FROM RATES).

Petition of the Metropolitan Overseers and Assessment Committee, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO BILL.

Petition from Dunfermline, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Wimbledon, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

Petition of the Scottish Women's Protestant Union, against; to lie upon the Table.

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SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Ecclesall, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

Petitions in favour, from St. Helens; Buckinghamshire; Pontypool; Newport; Ipswich; and Middlesex; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Wandsworth; Colne (four); Folkestone; York; Hulme; Yorkshire; Blackburn; National Temperance Federation; and Salford; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions against, from Newport (two); South Monmouth; and Western Division of Monmouthshire (two); to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Camborne; Parkgate; Colne (six); Golborne (eight); Wigan; Abertillery; Plymouth; Holloway; Blaina; Cardiff (two); Buckinghamshire; Barnsley; Maesycwmmer; Sandown; Folkestone; Ashton-under-Lyne; Meopham (two); Sheffield (four); Leeds; Long Eaton (six); Coventry (five); Bedwas Lower; Varteg Hill; Ratcliff; Padiham; Hereford; Bewdley; Kensal; Bideford; Manchester (two); Bradford (three); Salford (three); Glossop; Southgate; Highgate; Hartlepool; Pendleton; Beaufort (ten); London (five); Vernon; Newport (thirteen); Pontypool (five); East Brecknock; Kington Magna; Huddersfield (three); Hendon; Pengam; Harpurley, Hunstanton; Sunderland; Carlisle; Redcar; Guisborough; National Temperance Federation; Plaistow (two); Ipswich (three); Clevedon; Handsworth; Silvertown; Whitechapel; Blackwood (six); Bedwellty; Polaenavon; Chepstow (three); Maesycwmmer; Rogerstone;

Grimsby (two); Kentish Town; Seven Dials; Rawtenstall; St. Albans; Kilburn; Tottenham; Abersychan; Trinant; Blaenavon (two); Abergavenny; Portskewett; Taunton; Monmouth (three); Usk (two); Northfleet; Wakefield; Waltham; Streat-ham Hill; Ripon (five); Staines; Gravesend; Ebbw Vale; Blaina; Erdington; Risca; Didcot; Birmingham; Bridgwater; Wrexham; Chelmsford; Hayle; Hollo-way; Martock; Oldham; East Ham; Barking; Warrington; Bewdley; Wunllwyd (three); Victoria (two); Chorley; Malvern Link; Street; Newcastle under Lyne; King's Cross; Marlborough; Chelsea; and North East Lancashire; to lie upon the Table.

**SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE)
AND SALE OF INTOXICATING
LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.**

Three Petitions from Sandiacre, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petition from Wandsworth and Clap-ham, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

**LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT (METRO-
POLITAN BOROUGHES).**

Paper [presented 13th March] to be printed. [No. 95.]

AMERICAN MAILS.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 13th February; *Sir John Leng*]; to lie upon the Table.

**SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE)
BILL.**

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. SPICER (Monmouth Boroughs): In moving the Second Reading of the Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill, I am glad that the explanation of the actual Bill will not require many words. It is

practically a one-lined Bill, and provides that the Welsh Sunday Closing Act of 1881 shall be extended to Monmouthshire. It is the subject of the Bill upon which I will base my observations, and here again it is a portion only of the great subject of the drink traffic, which many thousands of people in this country are constantly considering with the deepest anxiety. To prove the truth of this statement one needs only to look at the opening pages of the recent Majority Report of the Royal Commission appointed by this Government on the Liquor Licensing Laws to find this comment on the drink traffic and drunkenness. They say that—

"It is undeniable that a gigantic evil remains to be remedied, and hardly any sacrifice would be too great which would result in a marked diminution of this national degradation."

This is a sentence from the Majority Report, signed by seventeen members, of whom eight are representatives of the drink traffic. Then, again, I am not even touching the whole of what is known as the Sunday Closing Movement. That is a movement, definite, well-defined, distinctive, and complete in itself, and its support has come from a wider area than that covered by any distinctively religious or temperance society. The portion of the subject embraced in the Bill that I am about to ask the House to read a second time—namely, Sunday closing for the County of Monmouthshire—touches only one part of that great movement, but it is supported by such strong evidence in its favour, and by such strong recommendations, that I hope the House, irrespective of party, will give it its support. It is really in no case a party question, and though I see some signs of opposition from members of the Conservative party, many members of that party are, I know, strong and earnest supporters of the principle contained in this Bill. I confess I am just a little surprised at the circumstance that the rejection of the Bill is to be moved by the hon. Member for the Denbigh Boroughs, because his honoured father was one of the strongest and most eloquent advocates that appeared before the Lord Balfour Commission in favour of this Bill. I cannot complain of sons taking different views from their fathers; but another point surprised me more. The hon. Member has been in this House all

through the present Parliament, and I have never heard of his bringing forward a measure for the repeal of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. I think that before he opposes what Monmouthshire thinks would be for its benefit he should state his position in this House on a Bill for the repeal of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. May I at this point say that in occupying this position this afternoon I lay no claim to having worked in former years in the formation of public opinion on this subject. I have not had that opportunity. Many inside, and many outside, this House have been at work in connection with this movement before I was sent here in 1892 to represent the Monmouth Boroughs; at the same time, when last year the Report of the Royal Commission was issued, and we learned by that Report that both the majority and the minority had come to similar conclusions as regards Sunday closing in Monmouthshire, I felt it my duty to accept the invitation of friends in Monmouthshire to introduce a Bill on this subject. The proposal to add Monmouthshire to the Welsh Sunday Closing Act of 1881 is no new matter. It was urged on the consideration of the House during the debates that led to the passing of the Welsh Act in 1881. It was again brought before the attention of Lord Balfour's Commission in 1889, and the evidence given before that Commission appears to me to be of the strongest character for the continuance of the Act and for the inclusion of Monmouthshire. With these preliminary observations I would say—First, the first justification which I venture to bring to the attention of the House for asking their acceptance of this Bill is that it is in complete harmony with the Majority and Minority Reports of a Commission that was appointed by the present Government to inquire into the whole subject of our Liquor Licensing Laws. I know that the House does not like quotations, but I ask their indulgence this afternoon, as I am very anxious to state the case fairly, and not to misinterpret words well considered before written down. Let us look, then, at the Majority Report, which was signed by seventeen members. That Report says, in regard to Sunday Closing in Wales—

"We see no reason to dissent from the general conclusions of the Royal Commission which inquired into this subject in 1890. We

are of opinion that in Wales, as a whole, Sunday closing has been a success, especially in rural Wales, and that if in some places, as in Cardiff, success has not been so fully maintained, improvement is discernible."

There were four dissentients to these paragraphs, so that, whilst they all signed the Report, two dissented distinctly, and, if I understand correctly, there were two others who dissented also. Then as regards extension of the Act to Monmouthshire, the Report continues—

"There is a strong local desire in Monmouthshire to be associated with Wales in the matter of Sunday closing. We consider that this wish should be acceded to, especially as regards urban districts situated near the border. An important object is to get a border line where there is a sparse population, so that the special difficulties inseparable from the existence of different laws in adjoining localities may be reduced to the smallest compass."

So much for the Majority Report. The Minority Report says—

"The Welsh Sunday Closing Act came into operation in the end of the year 1882. The Royal Commission on the operation of that Act in 1890 reported in favour of its continuance, and the Amendments which they suggested were made with a view of facilitating its enforcement. They had some doubts as to the wholly salutary effect of the Act in Cardiff and the mining districts of Glamorganshire, but they did not recommend a change, nor had they any doubt of the success of the Act in the rural districts where its provisions were in entire harmony with the opinion of the vast majority of the people. . . . We repeat that in Wales, as a whole, Sunday closing has been a success, and that if in some places, as in Cardiff, success has not yet been so fully maintained, a marked improvement is discernible, and we have no doubt that complete Sunday closing is entirely in harmony with the feelings and sentiments of the Welsh people."

I want the House to observe that the Majority Report is even stronger on the border question than the Minority Report. Closely connected with Sunday closing in Wales is the proposal to give Sunday closing to Monmouthshire apart from the rest of England. Mr. E. Grove, chairman of the Monmouthshire County Council, showed by means of a map that the inclusion of Monmouthshire in the Sunday closing area would do away with many boundary difficulties now encountered. At present within four miles of the Glamorganshire border are 200,000 people, as it runs right through the coal measure.

But taking the eastern side of Monmouthshire as the boundary of the Sunday closing area, only 9,000 people in an agricultural district would be affected, taking a four mile radius along the line. He argues that Monmouthshire is already included in Wales for many purposes, and that public opinion there is strongly on that side. He says—

"There can be little doubt that Monmouthshire has a strong claim, and we are of opinion that the local desire should be acceded to in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Welsh Sunday Closing Act."

My next point is that these Reports are the result not only of the evidence which the recent Commission took for itself—and I would especially refer to that given by Mr. Edwin Grove, by Mr. Maclean, by the Chief Constable of Cardiff (Mr. Mackenzie), in support, and by Mr. Lascelles Carr, who was in strong opposition—but they also had before them the evidence that had been taken by Lord Balfour's Commission in 1889. The two following extracts from the Lord Balfour's Commission give their opinion of the subject that is engaging our attention to-day—

"One of the suggestions most frequently made to us was the repeal of the Sunday Closing Act, or its modification in the direction of repeal by permitting the opening of public-houses for a short time in the middle and evening of Sunday, either for sale both on and off the premises, or for the latter only."

In reading through the evidence I was struck with the fact that comparatively few witnesses went for repeal. What they asked was that the *bona fide* traveller question should be altered. But what does the Commission say in reply? They say—

"We cannot, after giving them the fullest and most careful consideration, endorse either of these recommendations. Had it been our duty to advise on the form of the original legislation we might have suggested that some facilities should have been given for obtaining drink in small quantities for domestic consumption. We are, however, convinced that a change in this direction would be so unwelcome to so vast a majority of the population in so large an area of the Principality, that we do not think it ought to be forced on this large area for the sake of a possible benefit to the rest of the country. Moreover we find an almost complete absence of evidence of a desire for such an amendment of the law on the part of those classes who would be most likely to require or use it."

They also at that time had to deal with the border question, because, after all,

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the Welsh Sunday Closing question can never be settled until the border question is settled. They go on to say—

"It was urged upon us that the present border between Wales and England is an exceptionally unfortunate one, because it happens that for a very large portion of the distance it passes through a thickly populated and mining district on the borders of Glamorgan and Monmouth. In our opinion, there is some force in the argument, and we think that the difficulties of carrying out the law in these districts have been accentuated and increased by that case. Upon this fact an argument was founded for the inclusion of the county of Monmouth within the provisions of the Act, but we regarded such questions as beyond the scope of our inquiry, and would not accept evidence bearing either upon the inclusion of particular districts or upon the special fitness of any particular line of demarcation."

I am afraid that they were not quite consistent, for they did admit very strong evidence on that point—

"It is, in our opinion, sufficient for us to say that the special difficulties inseparable from the existence of different laws can only be reduced to the smallest compass where the least populous border line attainable is chosen. And we think the best way of dealing with this difficulty is to make sure that in urban districts situated on the border one law should prevail. It could not be difficult, and, in our opinion, it would be right to decide either that the licensing authorities should have power to agree which law should be put in force or that, pending agreement, the law affecting the majority of the population should bind the whole."

I have now stated the recommendations of the recent Royal Commission and also those of Lord Balfour's Commission, and I think from those recommendations and from the evidence on which they were founded I may make two or three general statements. First.—Sunday closing has proved to be a great success in Wales. It is true that they had in the early days—and existing even now to some extent—evils to contend with as regards shebeens and bogus clubs in large cities like Cardiff. But it was also evident that these difficulties are being dealt with vigorously, and that the general condition of Wales on Sunday has undergone a great change for the better. The improvement has not simply been felt in the homes of Wales on Sunday, but it has affected those homes throughout the whole year. That is admitted on all hands by both employers and workmen. Workmen have gone to their work on Monday morning much

more regularly, and consequently their whole social condition has been materially improved. The school fees, where school fees have had to be paid, have been paid much more regularly, and in general life there has been far more peace and less quarrelling. There is, however, one leading difficulty which only the inclusion of Monmouthshire into the Welsh Sunday Closing Act will remedy. At present you have a large proportion in the mining districts of West Monmouthshire within a very short distance of Cardiff. The consequence has been that when the public-houses were closed in Cardiff on Sunday there has been a constant stream of people passing into this part of Monmouthshire in order to obtain what they could not legitimately obtain in Wales. So that as Lord Peel has stated in his Report, "Sunday closing in Monmouthshire would, in his opinion, lessen Sunday drunkenness in Cardiff." In confirmation of this opinion, may I read an extract from the evidence given by Mr. William Mackenzie, the Chief Constable at Cardiff? He was asked—

"Have you found any special difficulty in carrying out the Sunday Closing Act because of the border difficulty?—Yes, we have some difficulties in that way. We get most of our Sunday drunkenness through people going across the border on Sunday to get drink. Last Sunday, for instance, we had three cases of drunkenness, and they were all from that neighbourhood, coming back from Monmouthshire from Rhymney. There were three cases of drunkenness and one case of stabbing, by people all coming from that neighbourhood.

"So that if Monmouthshire were included within the Sunday Closing Act, from a police standpoint, it would much help you to carry out the law?—I think there would be very much less drunkenness in that part of the town."

Again, the working classes, who are most largely affected, after seven years experience, testified most strongly before the Balfour Commission that they were in favour of the retention of the Act. I am bound to say that a great deal of this evidence was infinitely stronger than I expected to find it. I knew perfectly well what the opinions of all my Free Church friends were, and of all the leaders of all the various temperance organisations; but I was most surprised at the large amount of evidence given by working men, many of whom were not even themselves teetotallers, as to the advantages which they had obtained from the stopping of the drink traffic on Sunday. Having now stated

two justifications for my motion to-day, the question naturally arises, what does Monmouthshire say as regards this question? I think I can give a very satisfactory answer to that question. I presented yesterday to the House a petition in favour of this Bill from Newport containing 9,184 signatures. In addition to that, I have received sixty-one different petitions also in favour of the Bill. I have also received resolutions in favour of the Bill from the Monmouthshire County Council passed by thirty to twelve; from the Newport Town Council passed by sixteen to eleven; from the Newport Board of Guardians, which, if I recollect right, has only one against it.

COMMANDER BETHELL (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): Will the hon. Member say what was the number of the members of the county council?

*MR. SPICER: I think there are seventy members on the council, but notice was given of the resolution. I have received resolutions from twenty-one different urban, district, and parish councils. Strange to say, the resolution passed by the Ebbw Vale District Council, so I am officially informed, was moved by a licensed victualler, and the seconder was also a licensed victualler. Then I have ten resolutions in favour of the Bill from school boards in Monmouthshire. You will notice that I am only giving at present information I have received from Monmouthshire itself. I have received 178 resolutions passed in public meetings held after the Sunday evening services in the different Free Churches throughout the county. In the case of about half of these meetings the numbers present were sent to me, and the total number for that half amounted to 19,587.

MR. HOWELL (Denbigh Boroughs): May I ask whether these numbers included children?

*MR. SPICER: No; I am informed that in all cases they only included the adults. These were confined also almost entirely to the votes of the working classes, and the very fact that these resolutions were passed in so many of the Free Churches shows the unanimity which exists. Perhaps, as one who knows the inside of our Free

Church life better than many, I may say that I should not have attributed the same value to these resolutions if they had been passed prior to 1886. Before that time the Free Churches were mainly agreed on social and political questions, but that state of harmony was lessened by the introduction of the Home Rule question. From that moment some Congregationalists, Wesleyans, Presbyterians, and Baptists found themselves sympathising with the Unionists, and the cleavage, once made, has existed to the present time. You may rely upon it, therefore, that only those questions are brought before the different churches in meetings after the ordinary Sunday evening services, upon which they are practically unanimous. I ask you, therefore, to believe me when I say that these resolutions are perhaps the best indications of the real public feeling of the earnest-minded men in the county. I would also refer to the canvassing that took place in the district of Nantyglo. The district contains 1,034 householders, and returns were obtained from 908—for Sunday closing, 763; against, 109; neutral 36. I confess that the figures that were sent me seemed so remarkable that I ventured to ask for a good many more particulars, and in response the secretary sent me a personal letter from the vicar, in which he vouches for the facts which I have already stated. There was also a canvass in Monmouth, when 252 voted in favour of the Bill; 140 against, and 43 neutral. Then the Llandaff branch of the Church of England Temperance Society conducted a canvass amongst the incumbents in Monmouthshire, when 50 voted in favour of the Bill, 16 against, and 3 were neutral. I might here mention that the canvass of Nantyglo bears out what has been the result of a good many canvasses conducted by the Central Sunday Closing Association showing the wishes of the working classes. In purely working-class districts about one in ten are against the proposal; whereas if we take the district which includes some of the better class houses it is one in seven. That concludes the evidence from Monmouthshire itself. From outside the county I have received twenty-four petitions in favour of the Bill, and a great many resolutions. This morning I received a note in favour of the Bill from the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches of England, which

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is meeting this week in Sheffield. This council represents 600 district councils, and reflects practically the opinion of something like two millions of members and adherents. Well, then, what about the opposition in Monmouthshire? We have had two meetings in Monmouth and two in Newport—one in each town of the licensed victuallers alone, and one public meeting, at each of which resolutions against Sunday closing were adopted. The Conservative party in the Monmouth district, as a party, have not taken any public part one way or another in this movement. The only exception is that of Lord Llangattock, who wrote a letter to be read at that public meeting at Monmouth. I fully appreciate Lord Llangattock's good services to the county, and the kindest criticism I can make of his letter is that I am quite sure he never would have written it if he had read the evidence and the reports founded on that evidence. On the other hand, I was agreeably surprised to find that at the public meeting held in Monmouth, with a Congregational minister in the chair, the vicar of Monmouth voted in favour of the Bill and acknowledged that he had not always been in favour of Sunday closing, but that, after looking into the whole question, he had come to believe that a Sunday Closing Act was one of those measures that would work for righteousness. Having dealt with the question of what Monmouthshire itself needs to-day, you will naturally ask, why should Monmouthshire be dealt with separately from any other county? In the first place, I must repeat here the recommendation of Lord Balfour's Commission and the recommendation of the Majority and Minority Reports of the more recent Commission, and in connection with both of these I would again lay special stress on the geographical question, which Mr. Grove explained so fully to both Commissions.

"Now, if you will permit me [said he in his evidence], I should like to explain this map. In the first place, that black border shows the coal basin of South Wales and Monmouth. There the small river Rhymney is the division of the two counties, and this coal basin comes right into the centre of our county of Monmouth. Therefore, all down that line of demarcation there are pits sunk, and a very large industrial population living actually upon this border line, which is a very small stream or river. Now, within four miles of this border line there is a population of something like, in round figures, at least 200,000.

If you come to the eastern side of our county there is the River Wye, which is a large, bold river, and forms a natural boundary and separation between this and Gloucestershire and a little bit of Hereford. You have only comparatively two small places to deal with. One is Monmouth and the other is Chepstow. There is a small place in between called Tintern, and probably the Commissioners have heard of or seen Tintern Abbey. The place is very small and hardly worth mentioning. There are only about 350 people. So that if Monmouthshire were included, the agitation now affecting 200,000 people on the western side of our county, and certainly a large number also on the northern boundary, would be brought to a line where only 9,000 people would be affected. That was our point before Lord Balfour's Commission, and we asked for the inclusion of Monmouth by amending the Sunday Closing Act."

Then again, although Monmouthshire is technically an English county, it is often, for administrative purposes, and sometimes by legislation, treated as part of Wales. This has been due partly to the similarity of its development to that of the adjoining county of Glamorgan, and partly to the fact that a large proportion of its inhabitants are Welsh as to their origin, language, and habits. Monmouth was constituted into a county by 27 Henry VIII., c. 26, out of territory that was expressly stated to be part of the dominion of Wales. The position of the county at present is in many respects anomalous. In the division of the county into county court circuits, the whole of the county, along with Cardiff and Crickhowel (in Wales) and Ross (in Herefordshire) is grouped in what may be regarded as a Welsh circuit. Its inclusion in Wales for executive purposes has been general. It is so recognised by the Registrar General for statistical purposes, by the Local Government Board for poor law purposes, and by the Home Office for the purposes of the Mines Regulation, the Factory and Workshop, and Quarries Acts. In all matters educational Wales and Monmouthshire have been treated as a unit distinct from England. Both the Educational Department and the Charity Commissioners, in their superintendence and inspection of elementary and intermediate schools respectively, also include Monmouthshire in Wales, and reports specially dealing with Wales are printed in separate book form, from the annual general reports made by these two Departments. Lastly, may I deal for one moment with the objections that I have met with to this Bill? The first is that it is piecemeal legislation; but in this I have the support of some who feel that there is a strong justification for this course in the present instance. For example, the Bishop of London, speaking a few weeks ago on the temperance question, said—

"He was always very modest in matters of legislation, and, therefore, he would be exceedingly glad to see a modest Bill introduced into Parliament which contained those points upon which the Commission were agreed. It would be impossible for the Government to refuse to give a kindly hearing to such a Bill, and one of the subjects he suggested was the question of Sunday closing."

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Again, it is called class legislation; but after anxiously studying the evidence which led to the Reports of the Lord Balfour's Commission, as well as the Reports of the Royal Commission, I am bound to say that the evidence given emphasises the fact that the vast majority of the working classes appear to wish for this legislation. Certainly nothing is further from my wishes than to do anything to prejudice the interests of the great working classes; but after the attention I have given to the subject, I earnestly believe that the great masses of the working classes wish to see the Bill passed. I know that there is a section of the liquor trade against it; but the most responsible leaders of the trade, after having gone into the evidence, have recommended that action like this should be taken, and, therefore, I say the House should be guided by the general feeling of the trade, rather than take the line of those who are still against the principle of the Bill because they think their interests will be affected. There has been no trade movement in Wales crying out that they have been ruined by the Welsh Sunday Closing Act of 1881. Again, it is said that if this Bill is passed there will be an increase of shebeens and clubs. Judging by the evidence of such men as the Chief Constable of Cardiff, there seems no reason to fear that these evils will not be conquered. I say, deal with the matter as a whole, but do not decline to give Monmouth the advantage of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act because you have not dealt with these evils. And after reading the evidence before the two Commissions, and recent movements, I cannot help feeling the truth contained in the Report of the Commission of Lord Balfour, which I believe contained four members of the Conservative party, and

who, after hearing the evidence, came to the unanimous conclusion that "there is an almost complete absence of evidence of a desire for an amendment of the law on the part of those classes who would be most likely to require or use it." Under these circumstances I have no hesitation in asking Members in all parts of the House to give me their support in the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Spicer.*)

MR. HOWELL: In rising to move the rejection of this Bill, I hope I may claim from my friends opposite the benefit of the opinion that I do so in no spirit of partisanship, but because I think honestly it is undesirable that the House of Commons should pass its Second Reading. My hon. friend opposite said in his case for the Bill that it was a very short one; but although only short in form, it applies the whole procedure of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act to the county of Monmouth. My first objection to the Bill is that, for the first time in the history of the House of Commons, a Bill has been brought in to apply a general legislative principle to one county alone. [AN HON. MEMBER: No; Durham.] We have been, I understand, protesting up and down the country that it is an undesirable thing to deal with separate countries with regard to legislation, but we have gone further with this Bill than advocating separate legislation for Ireland, Scotland, and Wales; we have got to legislation for separate counties. If we admit that principle, why should there not be legislation for separate towns and separate villages, and then, I suppose, for separate individuals?—and when that experiment is tried we shall have chaos. Apart from the liquor question and temperance reform, the principle of the Bill is a wrong principle. My hon. friend says that the county of Monmouth has a peculiar position assigned to it, and that although technically it is an English county, it is really part of the Principality of Wales. I object to the word "technically." It is an English county by the statute 27 Henry VIII., cap. 26. By that statute the county of Monmouth ceased to be a shire of Wales, and from that time it was enacted that it was to be

governed in the same way as the shires of England. At any rate, it was something more than "technically" a county of England. The argument for including Monmouthshire in Wales would apply in the same way to Cheshire, which is included in the Welsh circuits. The position of the county is, no doubt, anomalous, but that is no sufficient reason why it should be included now in the Act of 1881, which when passed expressly omitted Monmouthshire. The difficulty which my hon. friend pointed out as to boundaries running through large centres of population existed in 1881, and there was really no stronger case then than there is now, the same objections existing in 1881 as in 1900. My hon. friend went on to say that Monmouthshire wants this Bill. We heard a great deal from him about petitions which have been presented and public meetings which have been held. Petitions have been presented by both sides, as petitions always are, and yet, if my information is correct, the signatures attached to the petitions against the Bill number something like 20,000, all of them being the signatures of adults. Therefore a substantial minority in the county has petitioned against the Bill. Take the question of public meetings. I do not think it is quite appropriate to call a meeting of a congregation which has just ceased to hold its services a public meeting. I do not think we are entitled to use the term "public meeting" in such a case. A public meeting is one that is called freely and to which everyone is admitted.

*MR. SPICER: If I used the words "public meeting" it was a slip of the tongue. I merely meant a meeting, not an ordinary public meeting.

MR. HOWELL: I accept the explanation of my hon. friend, but he did use the expression "public meeting," although he now says he did not mean it. After that admission a large part of the significance of my hon. friend's figures disappears. There are two great towns in Monmouthshire—the great commercial town of Newport and the county town of Monmouth. In those two towns two public meetings were held in the places where public meetings are generally held, and at both resolutions condemning this Bill were

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passed by a large majority of the rate-payers and electors. In neither of these two towns have what I might term public meetings been held in favour of the Bill. I do not want to labour that point too much, because every hon. Member who sits in this House must have considerable experience of bombardment by petitions, and by resolutions passed at public meetings, which may have been full or more or less empty. I have learned to discount methods of that kind to bring pressure on this House. I will make my hon. friend a present of the fact that there is a majority in favour of this Bill in the county; but will he say because there is a majority that therefore we should pass this Bill? That would be nothing else than local option in disguise. Because a majority is in favour of this Bill, are we therefore to say that they are entitled to carry their will against the minority? That is local option. As regards the principle of local option it seems to me an extremely strange principle, because it affirms the right of the minority in the nation while denying the right of the minority in the locality. As a national movement you cannot carry certain measures of prohibition throughout the whole of the country, but because you are a substantial minority you ask Parliament where the national minority is a local majority to impose your will in a locality where you happen fortuitously to be in a majority. This is an inconsistent principle, because it affirms the right of the minority in the country generally and then denies it in certain districts. Apart from that objection to the Bill as being local option in disguise, I always have denied the right of the majority to impose their will with regard to the liquor traffic on the minority unless the matter is one vital to the commonweal. [Cheers.] I appreciate those cheers, and I know the point of issue between us is whether it is vital or not to the commonweal. Far from its being vital, there is very great doubt as to whether it would be any advantage at all. I must warn hon. Members against the confusion which has even found its way into the Report of the Licensing Commission. The distinction between the success of an Act meaning as enforced and the success of an Act meaning that the result of the Act has been successful must be kept carefully in mind. I admit where you have discipline the Welsh Sunday Closing Act has been successfully enforced; that is to say

the sale of intoxicating liquor in public-houses on Sundays has been prevented. But when you ask whether, in addition to the successful carrying out of the Act, the Act has had good results, that is a different question altogether. I have heard it often stated by many people of responsibility in Wales that the drinking habit has not been reduced even where the Act is successfully carried out, and what is more, that in some cases drink is taken from the licensed house into the home. When you come to think of it, that is the natural result of the Act, and I am therefore entitled to say that there is very grave doubt, even where the Act is successfully carried out, that it has been attended with successful results. Take the populous districts, which would be mainly affected by this Bill. In the populous districts you have not been able to carry out your scheme of legislation to stop the sale of intoxicating liquor on Sundays. Why? Because there is a demand for intoxicating liquor, and because it is to the great majority of people a necessary of life. The result is that where there is repressive legislation a citizen who wants to exercise his tastes sets about evading the law. How does he do it? The first thing that happens is that clubs are established. A large number of these clubs are what are called bogus clubs. They were prosecuted in Wales; the courts were continually engaged in cases sent up by the magistrates, where points of law were involved, and there were so many convictions in course of time that people interested in the clubs found out the technicalities of the law from continued judgments. They learned what they had to do to make the club and the club rules pass the test of the law, and although you do not get now that series of prosecutions of bogus clubs, because the clubs know how to evade the law, the same state of things exists. It is the easiest thing in the world to get a solicitor engaged in those cases to explain how the rules should be drawn up in order that the law might be evaded. Newport, being without the Act, has at the present moment only two clubs; whereas Cardiff, which has the Act, has a considerable number of clubs. Another result of applying the Act is that you get people who do not take the trouble to set up a club at all. They set up what is called a "shebeen," where liquor may be obtained. These shebeens are most undesirable places. I do not want to dogmatise, but

there is a gentleman in Cardiff, a stipendiary magistrate, who has been administering this Act for some years, and who knows all about it. I will trouble the House with one or two extracts from a very striking expression of opinion given by him. He had been trying the case of a bogus club, and on the 10th of January, 1895, after giving judgment, Mr. T. W. Lewis went on to say—

"Houses unlicensed for the sale of liquor are being resorted to in this borough, principally on Sundays, by such large numbers both of men and women, and the excessive drinking, disorder and crime attributable to the sale and distribution of liquor on unlicensed premises are so frequently disclosed in the course of the proceedings of this Court, that it seems expedient to add the following observations."

Then he went on until he came to this :—

"In addition to the clubs, Cardiff, as is apparent from the prosecutions in this Court, abounds in illicit drinking places called 'shebeens.' 'Shebeens' are not unfrequently the scenes of serious crime and of acts of savage violence upon the police. During my seven years term of office as stipendiary magistrate how many hundreds of 'shebeen' keepers have suffered each the maximum imprisonment allowed by law. Several have been convicted for perjury committed in defending themselves here. Many have attempted to bribe the police; many have been convicted for violent assaults in resisting the entry of the police upon their premises. In spite of the heavy penalties inflicted, in spite of the strenuous exertions and faithful discharge of their duties by a large body of police in watching, detecting, and prosecuting 'shebeen' keepers and bogus club keepers, the illicit trade in liquor continues, and is exercising a very corrupting influence over a large section of the poorer classes."

This gentleman has more to do with this Act than anybody else. He holds a judicial position, and is not likely in connection with a matter of this kind to lose his judicial habit. His statement shows the existence of a terrible condition of affairs. Then Mr. Lewis continued :—

"With the very laudable object of diminishing drunkenness various social reformers are advocating various liquor licensing systems, and the Legislature has created stringent laws for the regulation of licensed houses. But the regulation and supervision required for unlicensed houses, when licensed houses are closed or in districts where licensed houses do not exist, are not appreciated by liquor law reformers, nor apparently have such regulation and supervision been contemplated or provided for by the Legislature as essential accompaniments of limiting the number or hours of trading of licensed houses. It is not my province to seek a cause for or to trace the origin

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of the illicit drinking establishments of Cardiff. If the cause be a harsh or too arbitrary limitation of the time during which liquor may be obtained legitimately on licensed premises, the Legislature may so relax the law as to remove the temptation to resort to unlicensed premises."

Although all these defects have been pointed out my hon. friend now proposes to extend the evils of the "shebeen" and the bogus club to the county of Monmouth. Why did not my hon. friend add to his Bill a couple of sections dealing with "shebeens" and bogus clubs? Then he might have said that the result of the Bill would not be to bring about these evils in Monmouthshire. Another evil connected with the Act is the *bona fide* traveller provision. You find respectable men travelling three miles to get alcoholic drink. They would not go to a bogus club, and they would certainly have nothing to do with a "shebeen." They have a notion of their own rights, and when they want a glass of beer on Sundays they travel three miles for it. That is a lawful evasion of the law as compared with the unlawful evasion of the bogus club and the "shebeen." The *bona fide* traveller provision has acted as a kind of safety valve, and if it had not been included there would have been a much greater agitation against the Act, and even if the three-mile limit is extended there will be very strong opposition to the Act as a whole. My hon. friend would like to do away with the *bona fide* traveller altogether. That is the position taken up by a section of the Royal Commission. I do not like to prophesy, but I think one of the results would be an explosion of public opinion if the safety valve were shut down.

MR. WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spenn Valley): Can the hon. Member refer us to the part of the Report of the Royal Commission in which that appears?

MR. HOWELL: If it is not in the Report it was given in evidence, but I will content myself with saying that some temperance reformers are in favour of the abolition of the *bona fide* traveller. If they succeed I prophesy dire results. By this Bill you will carry into Monmouthshire these bogus clubs, and clubs which are not bogus because they evade the law by proper rules and regulations, and "shebeens," and you will also introduce the

bona fide traveller. You will have in Monmouthshire, as in Glamorganshire at present, large bodies of men going about the country on Sundays and destroying peace and quiet. Why not leave Monmouthshire alone? At present it is in a very much better position as regards sobriety than Glamorganshire, which has got the Sunday Closing Act. I can quote figures, showing that where the Act is enforced drunkenness has increased, whereas it has decreased in districts to which the Act does not apply. In the quinquennial period 1878-82, the number of convictions for drunkenness per 100,000 of the population in Monmouthshire was 734; in the last quinquennial period, 1893-97, the figures were 634, showing that there has been substantial progress in sobriety. What is the condition of Glamorganshire? In the period 1878-82 the number of convictions per 100,000 was 771, and in the period 1893-97 it had increased to 1,314. Yet Glamorganshire is a county to which the Act applies, and Monmouthshire is without the Act, and you now propose to introduce the Act into Monmouthshire in spite of the striking progress in sobriety which has been made there. My contention is that where this Act applies there are more bogus clubs and "shebeens" and the districts are more addicted to drink. I do not see what answer can be given to the figures I have quoted. Beyond that, this Act would be another interference with the right of the citizen. I would like to quote from a speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire—who of course is now deeply interested in this measure—which he delivered in Oxford in 1872. This question was then even more acute than it is to-day.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I have learned a good deal since then.

MR. HOWELL: The right hon. Gentleman then said—

"I heard it affirmed that crime, poverty, and disease were the results of increased and increasing drunkenness. When I come to examine the assertions I find they cannot be supported. There seems to be, day by day, a growing disposition more and more to invoke the interference of Government in every relation of social life. I believe this to be a most dangerous tendency and one to which it is necessary to offer an early and determined

resistance. The question is, can you or ought you to put down drinking by legislation? You might of course make it impossible for any man to get anything to drink, and then of course no man could get drunk. Just in the same way you might put an end to all crime by putting everybody in prison. But when you have put everybody in prison you will not have made your population virtuous."

I would refer the right hon. Gentleman to the figures I have quoted. You shut up the public-houses in Glamorganshire, and you have not such a good result as in Monmouthshire. The right hon. Gentleman further said—

"What really makes sobriety valuable is the voluntary self-control, the deliberate self-denial which resists temptation and leads a man for the sake of himself and of others to abstain from vicious indulgence, and this is a thing you cannot create by Act of Parliament. I am against the whole system of 'petty molestation' and irritating dictation whether by a class or a majority. I am against forbidding a man to have a glass of beer if he wants a glass of beer."

Those were the feelings of the right hon. Gentleman. If he supports this Bill he is indulging in "petty molestation" of a substantial minority in Monmouthshire. If they want a glass of beer on Sundays they will be forbidden, if this Bill is passed, to have it. That, I submit, is a principle which the House should reject. It is "petty molestation" and irritating interference with the rights of the citizen. I move the rejection of this Bill because it is, I think, a wrong principle of legislation to ask this House to apply a broad principle of temperance reform to one county. In the second place, no case has been proved why this particular attention should be paid to Monmouthshire. Further, I say it is wrong to argue that because the majority of the county asks for this Bill it ought to be passed. That is local option. If you want local option the proper course would be to bring in a general Bill for the whole country which could be argued out before a full House. This Bill is wrong because, without trying to deal with the defects in the Act, it proposes to extend the Act to Monmouthshire and to introduce into that county bogus clubs, "shebeens," and the *bona fide* traveller, although Monmouthshire was expressly excluded from the operations of the Act. Moreover, this is a measure of class prohibition. The poor man's cellar is the licensed house; you are locking it; but I doubt if many hon. Members in

this House lock their cellars on Sundays. In conclusion, with regard to temperance reformers, I would say that it is a bad thing for their movement that they should attempt piecemeal legislation of this kind. I would say that until they learn to be just to the interests which are involved, and give greater weight to the rights and liberty of the individual citizen, they will delay the advent of that temperance measure which the vast majority of the people of this country desire to see. I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

COLONEL MORGAN (Monmouthshire, S.) formally seconded the motion.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Howell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): The hon. Gentleman who moved the rejection of this Bill has, as was to be expected, made out as plausible a case as possible. I will not dispute that there is a great deal of force in some of the arguments which he used any more than I will deny that there is considerable difficulty in dealing satisfactorily with questions of licensing reform. But although I listened to the hon. Gentleman with great care, I am bound to say he did not seem to me to answer in any satisfactory way any of my hon. friend's arguments. He stated that his chief objection to this Bill was that it extended general legislation to a single county, but he appears to have overlooked the fact that such extension has been very common. The very Act which he himself quoted from—the Act of Henry VIII.—which he says incorporated Monmouthshire with England, extends general legislation to particular counties, and you will find all through our statutes sections relating specially to Durham, Cornwall, and other counties. But more than that—it is within his personal experience that it is the practice now by Private Bill to extend matters of general legislation to particular districts. A Police and Sanitary Com-

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mittee has been appointed by this House, and its duty is to deal with these various points of general legislation, and therefore it is idle now for the hon. Gentleman to tell us that this is an absolutely novel principle.

MR. HOWELL: These statutes are enabling statutes.

*MR. McKENNA: Oh, no. There are many prohibiting clauses in the Bills which come before the Police and Sanitary Committee, and even new criminal offences have been made in particular districts. There is nothing novel in the idea, and if the House is led to imagine there is, and that by passing this Bill it would be opening a new era of legislation, it would be entirely mistaken. The hon. Gentleman disputes the statement of my hon. friend that Monmouthshire is merely an English county technically, and he referred to the 26th Chapter of the 27th of Henry VIII. I have read that Act with some care, and there is nothing in it which directly asserts that Monmouthshire is in England. So far from there being such a direct statement, I find in a marginal note in which the shires of Wales are mentioned that Monmouthshire is included among them. So far as that statute is concerned the inference might be drawn either way, and if the hon. Gentleman is really impressed with the fact that the Bill proposes to interfere with an English county, and that the claim of England to have full liberty to get drunk on Sundays is being broken into, he may console himself with the reflection that it is really a very technical and disputable point as to whether Monmouthshire is or is not in England. The hon. Gentleman also objected to the Bill on the ground that it was local option in disguise. I suppose he would call it the thin end of the wedge. I do not stand here at all in the guise of a temperance reformer. I have been asked in my own constituency whether I would support a Sunday Closing Bill for England, and on several occasions I have refused to pledge myself to any such measure. In a measure of this kind what we have to look to are the sentiments, feelings, and habits of the people concerned. The hon. Gentleman proposes that legislation should not be devised in accordance with the convenience of the people, but in order to satisfy some abstract idea of legis-

lative uniformity. Whether it is local option or not it is immaterial if it is necessary or suitable for the people, and we are not going to be frightened away from any good measure by the idea that we are introducing some new principle of legislation. Whether Sunday closing would be as advantageous in Middlesex as in Monmouthshire is a very doubtful question. In Monmouthshire it would be welcomed; in Middlesex I very much doubt whether it would be acquiesced in. Nobody need fear that in allowing this Bill to pass he will be constrained by argumentative process into voting for Sunday closing in England. Then the hon. Gentleman referred to the interference with the liberty of the subject proposed by this Bill; but the whole of our licensing legislation is an interference with the liberty of the subject. Why does this particular matter suddenly strike the hon. Gentleman as new? If the British subject is to have full liberty to get drunk, why not after half-past twelve or eleven or half-past ten, according to the hour the public-houses are closed in different places? All the small measures of useful social legislation which the hon. Gentleman promised at the last General Election would be an interference with the liberty of the subject. Why, then, refuse to give our consent to this measure because it embodies the very principle on which all our licensing legislation is based? The hon. Gentleman gave us some evidence as to "shebeens" and clubs, and he endeavoured to make out the best case he could. I do not know whether he would say, for instance, that because there is smuggling we should have no excise laws. I do not deny that there are bogus clubs, "shebeens" and other abuses of the law, but that does not prove that the balance of advantage is not with Sunday closing in Wales. This House is not a good tribunal to try questions of fact. We have not time to bring out all the evidence; we have no means of cross-examination. We recognise that we are not the best judges of fact by appointing Royal Commissions. There was a Commission in 1890 appointed by a Conservative Government with the express purpose of inquiring into the very charges of shebeening and bogus clubs which have been brought before the House by the hon. Gentleman. This is not a new matter. It has all been discussed,

witnesses have been examined and cross-examined, and the Royal Commission, which was not appointed by any means to defend the Welsh Closing Act, reported on that matter—not as a matter of conjecture, but after nine years experience of the working of the Act—as to what Parliament should do. When I find the members of that Royal Commission—who might be expected, from a pecuniary or propagandist bias, to come to opposite conclusions—agreeing on a matter of fact I take it that we could not have better evidence that the fact is true. The Commission of 1890 reported upon three matters. They reported first on the improvement in the condition of the streets as the result of the Act. They stated that the condition of the streets had been a real grievance and had been largely improved. The second matter in the Report was in reference to the greater regularity of the attendance of workmen at their places of employment. Upon that matter employers had been practically unanimous, although many of the employers who gave evidence on that point were against the Act. They stated that greater regularity had been substantially proved. The third point dealt with was under the general head of the increased comforts of the people, and upon that head the Commission reported it might be fairly claimed that this great abstention on the first day of the week—the day of greatest temptation—had been a powerful factor of moral improvement. There is not the language of temperance enthusiasts, but of men who were appointed to inquire into the weak spots of the Sunday Closing Act. Having heard all the evidence, and testing all the evidence, they reported that they could not, after giving it the fullest and most careful consideration, endorse either the recommendation to repeal the Sunday Closing Act or to modify it by permitting the opening of public-houses for a short time in the middle of the day and the evening of Sunday. This Commission, which had all the evidence before them, decided in favour of the continuation of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. My hon. friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill has dealt very fully and very ably with the Report of the second Royal Commission. In that Report only two gentlemen can be found out of twenty-four who are adverse and report against extend-

ing the Welsh Sunday Closing Act to Monmouthshire. They, too, had everything before them, and, as the hon. Gentleman has said, they knew about the shebeens and the bogus clubs, and yet six out of eight of those who were themselves interested in the liquor trade decided in favour of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. Could there be stronger evidence of the facts in this matter? What more is there to be said on the subject when you have got so unanimous Reports of two Commissions? Why, it would not be proper to waste the time of the House in going into further evidence or to refer to the vast number of petitions, the number of letters and resolutions, and the correspondence of all sorts I have received, like, I assume, my hon. colleagues in the representation of Monmouthshire. I hold in my hand the whole of the correspondence I have received adverse to this Bill. They consist of representations coming mainly from representatives of the licensed trade. I have one letter from a man representing himself as a working man. I have two resolutions from public meetings called, I think, both in the same town, and the rest represent resolutions of the licensed trade. I have received seven or eight of them, as against petitions and resolutions in favour of the Bill I could number by the score. Opposition to this Bill in Monmouthshire outside the trade is very slight. Organised opposition there is none; individual opposition there may be. When the hon. Member says it has a bare majority in Monmouthshire I can assure him it is something entirely different. The people in favour of this are not only the temperance people. They include numbers of men who are accustomed to go to the public-house. They ask the House to give a real meaning to their prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." They are tempted to go into the public-houses, and it is in their weakness that they cry, "Close these houses from us." This is a Bill in conformity with the will of the people of Monmouthshire, and by passing it I feel that the House will be doing a wise act, an act which will lead to the greater happiness of the public, and which will better the condition of the people of Monmouthshire.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton): I do not intend to go into the

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particular merits of the Bill at the present time. I have never been able to support local option or Sunday closing. To a great extent my views were expressed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. What I am interested in at the same time is some advance in licensing reform, and that something should be done for temperance legislation. I complete this month thirty years experience in this House, and it is a humiliating fact that in looking back over that period next to nothing has been done in regard to temperance or licensing reform, and while appreciating the object of my friend the hon. Baronet opposite and those who have worked with him, I lay it at their door very largely that it is so. They have lost opportunity after opportunity in a House which was prepared to pass measures which would greatly have promoted the cause of temperance. I think something like a modified Sunday closing might have been introduced. I think that at the time of the Local Government Bill an immense deal might have been done if the cry of the advanced temperance reformers had not been raised against the compensating of the publicans. If these clauses had been carried out there would have been hundreds of thousands of public-houses done away with. Still, from whatever cause the temperance cause has been hindered, there remains the fact that next to nothing has been done. This Government on coming in with a strong majority instituted a Licensing Commission, which sat for three years with great labour. I think that the credit of the Government and of this House is at stake if something is not done in carrying out their recommendations, and if we simply sit down and allow them to become a dead letter, I say that it is a very serious imputation upon the credit of this House. I would deeply regret the fact. In 1890 there was a Majority and a Minority Report, but there are many points on which both the majority and the minority are agreed, and I take it that when they were agreed upon this occasion by twenty-two against two, I certainly cannot refuse to carry out their recommendations. I know how thorny a question this licensing question is. I know how many Governments have tried their hands and burned their fingers in attempting to deal with it. I cannot hope that my right hon. friend the

Home Secretary will do much this session, but I hope that he will feel that the Government are bound to take up those points on which the majority and the minority are agreed, and endeavour to pass legislation. This question which is before us to-day is one of those points on which there was most substantial agreement, and therefore I have no hesitation in giving my support to the Bill.

*MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I may be allowed to express the hope that with regard to the points upon which the Commissions were practically united, the Government and the House will take the view that these points should be embodied at all events in a Bill and passed into law with as little delay as possible. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has indicated that he does not think it very likely that can be done this session. I hope nevertheless that that remark of his does not refer to the special Bill we are now considering. I think this Bill stands more or less by itself outside of the general recommendations of the Commission. It is a Bill in which the Welsh representatives take a keen interest, and owing to circumstances in the past the interest I take in it personally must always remain. I do not think it is necessary to reply in any detail to the speech of my hon. friend who has moved the rejection of the Bill. I agree entirely with the statement of my hon. friend that the case has been so fully and ably stated by my hon. friend the Member for the Monmouthshire District that it is unnecessary to occupy the time of the House in any further discussion upon the evidence which has been laid before the House in favour of the passing of this measure. But there are one or two points in the speech of my hon. friend the Member for the Denbigh District to which I wish to refer. I do not believe on an occasion of this kind in making personal references, but I think the House should be reminded of the fact that it is rather a strange thing in regard to this Bill, which is directly connected with Welsh opinion, that my hon. friend opposite should be selected to move the rejection of the measure, because it is a well known fact that my hon. friend some time ago announced his intention to leave at the next election. He has referred to the experiences we have gained up to now in regard

to the operation of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act of 1881, and he drew a distinction, and I think in many ways a fair distinction, between the result of that Act and the principle of that Act — or rather the intention of the Act when it was passed. He has pointed to the fact that in the populous districts, and especially in Cardiff, a number of difficulties have arisen which have been the means of securing the evasion of the Act in many directions. One of his complaints against the Bill now under discussion is that it deals only with the subject of Sunday closing in the county of Monmouth, and that it has no clauses within it for the purpose of meeting those practical difficulties which have arisen with regard to the general operation of the Act. I have only to reply to that in one word. As the House may be aware, I have for many years brought forward a Bill in this House to incorporate the recommendations of the Commission of 1890, with regard to the amendment and strengthening of the Act, and it is the firm belief of the large majority of the people of Wales, and of the Commission upon which I sat, that if these recommendations were carried out the practical difficulties he has referred to in regard to shebeening and bogus clubs in Cardiff would immediately disappear. But the House remembers that upon the only occasion when I had the chance of bringing forward that amending Bill here, it was the hon. Member opposite who talked it out. The hon. Member opposite has made reference to two special points in regard to the operation of the Sunday Closing Act in Cardiff which he said would be affected injuriously by the passing of this Bill. The first point which he raised was the question of clubs. He pointed out that there had been, owing to the operation of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act, an increase in the number of clubs in Cardiff. He went on to say that if we as a House sanctioned the principle of the inclusion of Monmouthshire within the Act these difficulties would be multiplied in the future. I would like, however, to remind the House of one or two facts in reference to this difficulty of the increase of clubs which is alleged to have taken place owing to the operation of the Sunday Closing Act. In the first place, I should like to make it plain with regard to clubs

in Cardiff that that town stands very much better than most English towns of similar population. The inference to be drawn from the speech of the hon. Gentleman opposite was that because of the operation of the Sunday Closing Act in Cardiff there had been an immense increase in the number of drinking clubs there, and that the town therefore compared unfavourably in that regard to English towns of a similar character and population. I will just remind the House that there were in 1897 in Cardiff—I am giving from memory the evidence submitted to the Commission—thirty known clubs at which drink was sold. Now take two towns of similar population in England—Oldham and Bradford. In Oldham there were no less than sixty-nine—more than twice as many—and in Bradford eighty-one—almost three times as many. In other words, where you have not Sunday closing you have more drinking clubs, and where you have Sunday closing you have fewer.

MR. MACLEAN (Cardiff): What are the numbers of members of the clubs?

*MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I have no note of that, but I can assure my hon. friend that the clubs in both these places were clubs of a similar character, and I should be very much surprised if they were larger in any material respect. Another point with regard to clubs is this. Evidence was placed before us when sitting on the Commission to the effect that the number of those who used these clubs for drinking purposes had largely increased since 1889. In 1889, so far as Cardiff was concerned, a return was made which indicated that from a census of those attending the clubs there were found to be drinking within the clubs in that year 2,600. In 1895 there were over 5,000. But the witness who made that statement—Mr. Lascelles Carr, the editor of the *Western Mail*, an able and persistent opponent of the Act—pointed out that this was due to an increase having taken place in clubs of the political complexion to which he belonged. The third point I wish to make is that, previous to the passing of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act of 1881, in the year 1877 no fewer than seventy-eight bogus clubs were suppressed by police proceedings. At that time the town of Cardiff had a population of 80,000. In

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1895 there were twenty-four, and in 1897 the number was thirty when the population had increased to 170,000. The other point made by my hon. friend opposite was on the question of shebeening. I would be the last in this House to say that that does not exist in Cardiff as a real difficulty. This difficulty existed before the passing of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act, and it is a thing which has been grappled with, and can be grappled with by the ordinary operation of the law. If the recommendations made in the Bill, to which I have already referred and which I have introduced many times in the House, were carried out, the difficulty would be almost entirely done away with. It is a fact that there have been, during recent years in Cardiff, a large number of prosecutions in connection with those illicit sales of beer in shebeens. In 1891 there were 120 prosecutions; in 1892, 360; in 1893, 220; in 1894, 216; in 1895, 196; and in 1896, 106; so that it is true that with regard to the number of shebeens there has been of late years a steady diminution in the number of prosecutions. That has been brought about, no doubt, by a more effective and strict police supervision of them. I also have a note here of a leading article in the *Western Mail* for 28th January, 1897, bearing on this subject, in which these words occur—

“Probably we have shebeens in Cardiff, but what of clubs, and what of private drinking?”

I should say that the article was written decidedly against the policy and operation of the Sunday Closing Act, and the point which was made was that although it was true that there were fewer shebeens in Cardiff—what of clubs, and what of private drinking? I have already pointed out that, in regard to clubs, Cardiff does not stand behind but rather before similar towns in England. I have two other points to make in regard to shebeening—first of all, the point of their local distribution. More than one reference has been made in the course of the debate to the remarkable evidence given by the Chief Constable of Cardiff—evidence worthy of the most serious consideration of this House. What he pointed out was this, that in the year 1896, out of 106 prosecutions for shebeening, no fewer than ninety-eight came from one district, and that the lowest district in the town. He pointed out,

further, that the character of those who were prosecuted made it absolutely clear what kind of people frequented them. Out of the 106 prosecutions twenty-one were thieves, seventeen were persons who had been previously convicted, and forty were connected with houses of ill-fame. In other words, 75 per cent. of those prosecuted belonged to the lowest stratum of human society in the town of Cardiff, and I would ask the House whether it is necessary in the interest of people of this kind and character to, in any way, modify the Sunday Closing Act or to give them facilities for drinking on Sundays. The real question before the House, I take it, to-day is this: Will the granting of Sunday closing to the county of Monmouth lessen or increase the difficulties and the operation of the Act in Cardiff and the populous districts about Cardiff? There is no doubt about the desire of the county on the point. The only serious objection that can be urged to the Bill is whether, if passed, it would increase the difficulties of the operation of the Act in Cardiff itself. I submit that the evidence is overwhelmingly against that supposition. It was stated before the Commission of 1896 and the Commission of 1889 that there had been a distinct improvement in public order upon Sunday in Cardiff itself. The hon. Gentleman opposite seemed to make rather light of the opinion of the Royal Commission, but, after all, I do not think this House will agree with him in that. For three years we sat taking evidence on these points drawn from every possible quarter, and we were by no means of one mind on the question, but we were of one mind on this point. The Chief Constable, when asked whether Cardiff was worse than Bristol or Manchester, replied that it was not worse than either of them. Similar evidence was given by other witnesses. The Chief Constable also said they got most of their Sunday drunkenness from people coming over the border. The chief difficulty in regard to Sunday closing in Wales had reference to the border between Cardiff and Monmouthshire. The hon. Member opposite and those who agree with him seem to have made up their minds that whatever you do in regard to Cardiff the evils of Sunday drinking are bound to continue and are bound to increase. I am not one of those who are prepared to endow Cardiff with a double dose of

original sin. I fail myself to see how it is likely that Cardiff is bound to be permanently on the increase as regards Sunday drinking. What I say is that, given similar conditions as have existed in regard to this portion of the law in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other large towns in Scotland, and I say the results will be and are bound to be the same. Cardiff, as my hon. friends on this side know, has of late shown that it is desirous of entering in fully with the national aspirations of Wales. I do not know whether it is not a fact that Cardiff dreams of some day being the capital of Wales. At all events it has made up its mind, so far as the great majority of the inhabitants are concerned, to do nothing to thwart or oppose the trend of national opinion in Wales, and that being so I do not think it expresses the real view of the place to say that it is desirous permanently to put itself behind Wales in regard to Sunday closing. If this Bill is passed I have no doubt it will be in accordance with the overwhelming opinion of the country. If passed, I feel sure it will make Sunday closing in Wales still more a success; and lastly, I believe it will be the means of enabling the people of Wales to go forward one more important step along the path of social and moral progress.

MR. MACLEAN: The hon. Member who spoke last made some pleasant remarks on the natural and legitimate aspirations of Cardiff to become the capital of Wales, and he seemed to think that if Cardiff identified itself with the Sunday closing movement that would in some way tend to strengthen her claim. But I must say from my own experience I do not think that Cardiff would be more likely to achieve her sublime ambition to become the capital of Wales if she put a stop altogether to the sale of strong liquor in the town. On the contrary, I believe that the Sunday Closing Act has only succeeded there because it is systematically evaded, and because anybody who wishes to get strong drink on Sunday can do so in a perfectly open and natural manner in spite of the Sunday Closing Act. Much stress has been laid in the debate on the fact that the Royal Commission which recently sat were unanimous in recommending that the

Sunday Closing Act should be extended to Monmouthshire. But too much importance should not be attached to that conclusion. We know a good deal about the history of that Royal Commission. We know that the members were constantly engaged for a very long period in quarrelling with one another and with their chairman, and I suppose that when it came to their making up their Report they looked about to see if there was any particular point on which it was possible for them all to come to some agreement, and at last they decided that they would recommend the extension of Sunday closing to Monmouthshire, on the principle *de minimis non curat lex*. Certainly the Report of that Commission has not attracted great attention from the Government of the day, and it has not made a very great impression on the country. The Government have not, so far as I am aware, attempted to introduce legislation based upon that Report. Supposing they were to do so, it would be exceedingly puzzling, because the Commission, by a very large—indeed an overwhelming—majority condemned local option, and then immediately stultified itself by recommending local option for Monmouthshire. That is what the present Bill comes to. If the Government proposed to bring in a large licensing measure dealing with the whole question, we should be prepared to discuss it, and possibly then the whole subject might be thoroughly threshed out; but it seems to me that as the Government has refused to have anything to do with the Licensing Commission, so far, we might wait until it takes up the Report before we are qualified to deal with one particular section of the subject. We have had a speech from one of the Members for Monmouth, who very frankly declares that he is not an advocate for Sunday closing for England; he says it is to be adopted in Monmouthshire simply because the people there happened to be in favour of it. That is a very strange proposal to lay before the House of Commons. It appears that English Members are asked to-day to indulge in an act of vicarious sacrifice; they are to go on allowing their constituents in all parts of the country to drink as freely as they like on every day of the week; but a line is to be drawn at Wales, and we are to enhance our own sense of morality and respectability and

Mr. Maclean.

temperance by compelling the people of Monmouthshire to abstain from having anything to drink on the first day of the week. I do not think that is a principle of legislation which ought to be adopted in this House. Clearly, if we are to have local option adopted in Monmouthshire it will creep along to Gloucestershire and Somersetshire, and then up the whole line of the Great Western Railway to London. You cannot have this principle adopted in one part of the country and not in the rest. I should like to know what line the Government itself intends to take with regard to this measure. Here is a piecemeal proposal of legislation inflicting a very serious burden upon a trade with which the Government is not at all anxious to interfere. Everybody who has interfered with that trade, as the hon. Baronet opposite knows, has burnt his fingers in the progress. The right hon. Baronet who spoke just now warned the hon. Baronet of the mistake he made in not allowing compensation to the brewers some years ago. Similar penalties are about to be inflicted upon the licensing trade. It is only a week ago we heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer come down here and state that he was looking about for money, and he immediately asked the beer and spirit trades to supply him with £2,500,000 in addition to the enormous revenue they already yielded to the Exchequer. Is it an opportune season, immediately after the sacrifice the trade has so willingly made, for the Government to say, "We are going to impose fresh penalties upon the trade"? We have had a good deal of discussion about the way in which Sunday closing is received in Wales. It was sprung upon the people there as a complete surprise, because English Members would not take the trouble to interfere in the matter. They did not foresee that the principle adopted there would ultimately be extended to their own country. It is said that the principle has been gladly adopted throughout Wales. It has not been so adopted in Cardiff, as has been proved over and over again. All the Commissions which have sat have agreed upon this point—that it is impossible to carry out legislation of this kind in any populous district. Why is it carried out, or said to be carried out, in Cardiff? Simply because there are an immense number of clubs there, so that everybody who desires a glass of beer or

spirits on Sunday can get it in a perfectly natural and legitimate manner. It does not require a shebeen or any illegitimate means to evade the Act. So far as Cardiff is concerned, the Sunday Closing Act is a perfect delusion; it does not really exist. The Act has no force in Cardiff, because everybody who wants to drink knows where he can go to get anything he desires. But my main objection to this Bill consists in the fact that it is piecemeal legislation. The whole question of licensing legislation ought to be undertaken as one subject. A measure ought to be introduced by the Government of the day after careful consideration of the various Reports that have been presented by the recent Royal Commission. I contend that it is absolutely absurd that a small body of Members in this House should put forward one particular recommendation of the Commission, and say that it should be adopted in preference to all the other recommendations. I throw the responsibility on the Government of dealing with that Commission, and I protest against the notion that Wales is to be made the scapegoat in a matter of this kind, while England goes altogether scathless. I shall certainly oppose the Second Reading of this Bill, because I consider it is a perfectly unauthorised and unwarrantable attempt to interfere with the settled habits and enjoyment of the population.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): Of all the observations which have been made in the course of this debate, the last remark of the hon. Member who has just spoken strikes me, as a Scotchman having some experience of the subject under discussion, as the most extraordinary. It is said that Wales or Monmouthshire is to be made the scapegoat for dangerous experiments. I come from a country where we have had Sunday closing for forty-seven years, but we have not felt that our national independence has been in the slightest degree impinged upon or that in the matter of the liquor traffic our nation has been made a pack of scapegoats. I entirely agree that we must be taught and guided by experience, and unless we are to adopt the absolutely hopeless attitude of saying that if in liquor reform we cannot do everything at once we will do nothing at all, we must take the experience of one

locality or one country to help and guide us with regard to the application or extension of the experiment elsewhere. The last speaker has said some things not very complimentary about the Royal Commission. I lament that the Royal Commission on this thorny topic did not find its way to agree on many of the points that were put before it; but surely it is the duty of this House, however small the agreement of that Royal Commission may have been, if there are one or two or three points on which the majority and the minority are absolutely unanimous in recommending a certain course, to welcome and follow the leading which is given. The hon. Member for Cardiff has made one or two observations bewailing the inaction of the Government. Whether he did so in sincerity or in sarcasm the House can best judge. I had better confess at once that if on this topic of licensing reform we are to wait for the action of Her Majesty's Government, and if the policy of Her Majesty's Government is to do nothing until it can do everything, then indeed we may wait until the crack of doom. It is time that somebody should show what has been the experience outside England and Wales on this very important social topic. Since the year 1853 we have had the experience of Sunday closing, not in one district, not only in country districts or only in towns, but in the whole of Scotland, and we have now also the unanimous verdict of the Royal Commission on this subject. Any one anxious for licensing reform can by plodding through the Commission's Report find not a few matters upon which we are able to say the majority and the minority agree. I would venture to put forward this broad proposition: There is no man of sense and experience in this House or out of it who has any responsibility for his utterances who would for one moment propose the repeal of the Sunday Closing Act of Scotland. Lord Peel's Report gives, only in other words to the same effect, the verdict of the Report of the majority. It says—

"The practical unanimity of Scottish opinion renders it impossible to question the success, and unnecessary to discuss the policy, of Sunday closing. No single class has asked for a repeal of the Forbes-Mackenzie Act, and it is universally considered that it should be maintained."

And yet I suppose we are the scapegoats! I would specially commend these next

sentences to those who care so much and speak so strongly for the interests of the trade—

"There is no person of experience and knowledge of Scotland who would think of going back. There has been no agitation among the members of the trade to repeal the Act. The re-opening of public-houses would not be listened to for a moment. There is no tendency in Glasgow to go back, but the very reverse. Not half a dozen publicans in Edinburgh would assist or encourage an agitation for the repeal of the Act; nor is there a constituency in Scotland which would return a member who announced himself as in favour of such a repeal. The success of the Act is so generally recognised that the Free Church has ceased to record it in their reports. Publicans would object to its repeal more strongly than any other body."

There are three classes of opinion in Scotland on this subject. The first class of opinion I may call the representative, and I will take one sentence from the evidence of one witness—one of the most able, high-minded, and sincerely good public servants who have ever lived in Scotland, the Lord Provost of Glasgow. His evidence before the Commission was in the following terms—

"(Q.) Is there any tendency in Glasgow to go back on Sunday closing?—(A.) No, the very reverse.

"(Q.) Do you think that an extension of the opening of public-houses for a couple of hours in the day for the accommodation of *bona fide* cyclists and others would meet with approbation?—(A.) It would not: it would meet with very great disapproval."

That is the opinion, in a word, of the public in general in Scotland. I will now take the opinion, not of the magistrates, not of the representatives of public opinion, but of those in charge of public order, because that appears to me to go to the root of the distinction which the hon. Member was good enough to draw. It may, or may not, be called local option, but the question is whether those who live in a district and suffer by the crime and disorder within the district should not have the governing of that district in regard to this matter. I therefore take the Chief Constable of Aberdeen as a fair exponent of this class of opinion. He has been chief constable for seventeen and a half years, and he was asked this question—

"Have you during your experience ever heard any desire expressed by any considerable section of the public to repeal Sunday closing?"

Mr. Thomas Shaw.

What is his answer?

"Never. I think the publicans themselves would object to it more strongly than any other body."

I will now take the opinion of the publicans as given through the secretary of the Licensed Victuallers' Association, or a body of that kind, Mr. Purvis. This is his evidence on this question:

"(Q.) May I ask, on behalf of the association you are connected with, have you ever heard of any agitation among the members of the trade to repeal the Sunday Closing Act?"

Remember, this is an official, entitled to express the official and representative opinion of the trade. His answer is—

"There has been no agitation. (Q.) From a selfish point of view, from the point of view of their own interests and a desire to consult their own comfort, they do not wish the present system altered?—(A.) That is so. (Q.) They wish to have their places closed on Sundays?—(A.) Yes. You might get some, but very few, to advocate Sunday opening."

I thought it right to interpose in this debate simply to say that it is quite a mistake to suppose that we are applying to one part of England or to a fringe of Wales a principle which has had only eighteen years experience in one part of these islands. We are applying a principle which has held sway in Scotland with universal approbation for forty-seven years, and unless experience is to go for nothing, we who come from Scotland, no matter on which side of the House we sit, are surely entitled to go into the lobby with our Welsh friends, and to say that by our experience we can aver and take our oath that they will benefit in Monmouthshire as we have benefited in Scotland by the application of this principle. It is altogether a mistake to say that it means a sacrifice on the part of the trade. It means nothing of the sort. The trade itself, having had this experience in Scotland, are the first to decline to go back. Not only have we a negative idea, but we have positive grounds for this view, which are most illustrative. Here are certain figures as to the number of people drunk and incapable. This is on the assumption that there may be something in the remarks of the last speaker with regard to clubs. I do not see much in the argument as to elubs. It would rather appear to me that the corollary would be to shut

the clubs, but not to open the public-houses. But, clubs taken into account, what are the actual statistics given by Mr. Wyness, chief constable for Aberdeen? He takes the whole apprehensions in Aberdeen for being drunk and incapable. The average for a series of years was 340 per annum. Will the House believe it, the number for the year being 340, the number on Sundays is two? We cannot reckon it in percentages. But there is more than that. According to last year's Prison Report, the Prisons Commissioners went over the prisons and ascertained, without any process of selection, the days of the week on which crimes in general were committed, and out of the 245 instances inquired into, only ten were on Sundays. I think that ends the matter. It is not a mere matter of opinion cherished by those in favour of licensing reform; it is a matter of opinion held even by members of the trade, the public, local authorities, and the police. The entire expressed opinion of Scotland is that the person would be fit for confinement or having something done to him who would urge that we should go back upon Sunday closing. The long and short of it is, that if this House is to abdicate its functions in these matters of profiting by the experience of one locality and applying that experience beneficially elsewhere, we should throw out this Bill. If, on the contrary, we take a wiser and saner, and more prudent course, we shall with great unanimity pass this measure.

MR. ORR-EWING (Ayr Burghs): As a Member representing a Scottish constituency on this side of the House, I should like to say a few words strongly in favour of this Bill. It is perfectly true that in Scotland we have had Sunday closing for the last forty-seven years, and it is also perfectly true that when that Act was being discussed it was opposed by some Members on the same grounds as this Bill is being opposed to-day, namely, that it was an undue interference with the liberty of the subject. What has been the result of the Act? It has been a most complete success, and the opinion of Scotland is unanimous in its favour. During the time which has elapsed since

the passing of the Act a generation has grown up and formed habits under its operation. I know that people say there is a difference between Scotland and England by reason of the fact that in Scotland whisky is the article of drink, while in England it is generally beer; that you can keep whisky without it deteriorating, while draught beer will deteriorate. All I can say is that I do not think the price of drinking bottled beer on Sundays is too high a price to pay for increased sobriety and order. The hon. Member for the Denbigh Boroughs says he is against this Bill because it will lead to local option, and he contends there is no stronger argument in favour of it now than in 1881. As regards local option he need not be afraid, for we in Scotland have had an Act similar to this for forty-seven years, but we have not yet got local option. As regards the other point, the very fact of the Act passed in 1881 having been such a great success in the rest of Wales is a very strong argument in favour of it being applied to Monmouthshire. What we have really to do is to decide between the merits of the arguments advanced in this House to-day against the Bill and the merits of the Report of the Royal Commission, which, although agreeing that Sunday closing for the whole of England would be in advance of the times, agrees that Welsh Sunday closing should be extended to Monmouthshire. I must say that in my opinion the whole of the question of temperance reform and legislation dealing with licensing is in a most unfortunate position. It is a most unfortunate fact that, speaking generally, what is called "the Trade" look upon Members on this side of the House, with a few exceptions, as their monopoly. It is also a most unfortunate fact that the temperance societies, who are in favour of very extreme views, look upon hon. Members on the other side of the House as their monopoly. It is very unfortunate that these societies give out that what they want is not reform, but abolition; and it is also very unfortunate that those who represent the

defence of the trade send out circulars bringing pressure to bear on hon. Members to vote against every measure of reform, however small and unimportant it may be. Such arguments as are sometimes put forward tend to make us who are in favour of such measures support more strongly the progress of those Bills. If the reforms which were suggested some twenty-five years ago had not been opposed by some and scouted by others, the position of the licensing laws and the whole of the temperance question would have been very different from that in which they now are. The position is all the more unfortunate because I believe there are a considerable majority of the Members of this House in favour of reforms which would confer an enormous benefit on the whole of the community. There are two of the recommendations of the Royal Commission now before the House in the shape of Bills; one is with reference to raising the age to sixteen years of those to whom intoxicating liquors can be sold, and the other is that now under consideration. Unless the House intends altogether to stultify the labours of that Commission, which would cause the greatest disappointment throughout the country, we should certainly pass those two Bills into law.

*MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I have listened with some interest to the speeches of the two Members who have last addressed the House, and if any reply could have knocked into a cocked hat the arguments of the hon. Member for the Border Burghs, it was that of the hon. Member for the Ayr Burghs—for this reason: The last speaker has told the House that the people of England drink beer, while the people of Scotland drink spirits, and he, being a spirit-drinker, has no earthly desire to consult the palate of the beer-drinker, who, as far as he is concerned, may drink flat beer which has been drawn for forty-eight hours.

MR. ORR-EWING: I said bottled beer.

Mr. Orr-Ewing.

*MAJOR JAMESON: Then perhaps the hon. Member will bring in a Bill to make bottled beer as cheap to the working man as draught beer. A great deal of this talk comes from want of knowledge of the trade. I recollect that when Sunday closing for Scotland was before the House some time ago the late Under Secretary for War gave a reason why Sunday closing was so very fitted to Scotland pretty much the same as that put forward by the hon. Member for the Border Burghs to-day—namely, that the commodity they used could always be kept in a bottle with a cork in it. I take exception to that, because I do not believe the Scotchman ever breathed who could keep the bottle and the cork together as long as there was any liquor in the bottle. The hon. Member for North Monmouth spoke of twenty-two of the twenty-four members of the Licensing Commission being in favour of this measure. He evidently has forgotten or has not read some very interesting remarks made by a gentleman well known for his probity and honesty—the late Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, Sir Algernon West. Speaking of the Report of the majority and the Report of the minority, he says that though the two Reports agree in recommending a reduction of the hours of Sunday opening, they do not agree that the country is prepared for total Sunday closing. You have this fact: that although, probably as a compromise—a compromise which was never allowed to be carried out—twenty-two out of the twenty-four members may have made such a statement, in the first place they had no rebutting evidence before them, and they absolutely report against their own decision. The ablest man who sat on that Commission denies that any such agreement as has been referred to was ever come to. He says—

“It is obvious that Lord Peel's proposals would have been defeated by seven to one.”

People talk about a majority of twenty-two out of twenty-four, but here you have as an absolute fact that the proposals which were practically the same as local option had seven to one against them. What are we asked to do to-day? We are asked to do by a private Member's Bill something the Government has not

yet decided. Is it fair to pass such a Bill? Would anyone credit that hon. Gentlemen opposite, who certainly more than we on this side have the support of the trade, would go out of their way to put an embargo on the trade which has paid all their war taxes? In this instance I should like the Government to support the licensed trade. You are quite ready to make them pay the piper and to take their money. The hon. Member for North Monmouth went back to the time of Henry VII. I should like to go back a little further. In the time of the Israelites the question of Sunday closing was in vogue. There were two classes of Israelites who were to a certain extent temperance reformers—one class were total abstainers, and were called Rechabites, while the other class were total abstainers during the week, and grew their hair long to show they were sober, but who on high days and holidays, and more particularly on the Jewish Sunday, gave way to drink, and took what they wanted. These were called Nazarites. I leave it to hon. Members on both sides to say to which class they belong, but I do not see on the back of this Bill the name of a single Member of the Jewish persuasion. They are good hard and fast men of business; they know the wants of the people. One of the names I do see is that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, who is never tired of playing Darby to the Joan of the temperance societies; but though Darby always embraces Joan, Joan does not always embrace Darby, as the right hon. Gentleman is aware. I hope the House will not allow a serious Bill of this kind to pass without the Government having made clear to us what they intend to do on the subject. Private Members should not be permitted to pick out lines or words, and add and paste and put together little pieces of the three years' work of the Royal Commission. Working men of this country do not want your grandmotherly legislation; they are perfectly able to take care of themselves. This Bill is a hollow sham and farce, and should be thrown out with the greatest possible expedition.

*MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I should be very unwilling to give a silent vote on this occasion. I am cer-

tainly a "conscientious objector" to the oppression of any trade whatever, and I hold myself perfectly free, whatever I may say or whichever way I may vote this afternoon, to vote as I choose upon the question of local veto or any other matter of that sort which may come before the House in the future. In common with many others on either side of the House, I feel myself in this peculiar difficulty. In 1896 we approved of the appointment of a Royal Commission. We thereby implied that we thought there were certain gentlemen in this country sufficiently unprejudiced, sympathetic and wise to discuss among themselves what should be done on this all-important licensing question. These gentlemen differed to a very considerable extent on many subjects, but on one or two matters they happened to agree. Are we, having delegated this important duty to that Commission, to nullify and make of no effect one of the few recommendations upon which they agreed? I am no enemy of the brewers; I do not suppose I should ever support a Local Veto Bill; but this afternoon I am animated the further by the strength of local opinion. The views of the locality are strengthened by the findings of the Commission. They say that temperance will be promoted by the extension of the present Sunday closing to Monmouthshire. That is the best local opinion; it is backed up by the recommendation of the Royal Commission, and I certainly do not feel myself strong enough to go against it. A great responsibility rests upon the House of Commons. We have to choose between seeing the present law nullified by these fortuitous and geographical circumstances which happen to exist, and having the spirit of the law and the spirit of the recommendation of the Royal Commission entirely carried out by this simple Act of extension. I feel that we ought either to accept with the greatest respect the recommendation of this Commission, which we ourselves appointed, or else altogether to abolish such useless and expensive institutions.

MR. WHITTAKER: In regard to this measure I desire to point out that the Royal Commission on Licensing were almost unanimous in recommending a Sunday Closing Bill for Monmouthshire, although they were not agreed that the country was ready for total Sunday closing generally. The Royal Commission by twenty-two votes out of twenty-four agreed that Sunday closing for Monmouthshire was desirable. The hon. Member who moved that this Bill be read this day six months objects to it because he sees in it some development of the idea of local option. He seems, however, to have overlooked the fact that the Conservative party proposed to give to county councils in 1888 the power to decide this question. Therefore his own party is committed to county local option upon this subject. The hon. Member was in error in saying that no Bill of this kind had ever been introduced in this House. I would remind him that Sunday Closing Bills have been before this House not only for Wales but for Monmouthshire, Yorkshire, the Isle of Wight, Cornwall, and Durham. In regard to those Sunday closing measures which have been passed, every prediction made by the opponents of Sunday closing has been falsified by the facts. We have now Sunday closing in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and since those Acts have been in force no hon. Member representing any one of those countries has ever dared to move that one of those Acts be repealed. We have never had a motion from a single Member representing one of those counties to make one of those Acts less stringent. In fact all the motions which have been made have been to extend the operation of those Acts and make them more stringent. The hon. Member for Cardiff, who does not like the Welsh Sunday Closing Act, made a strong point before his constituency, and he persuaded himself that the people were against it. He has never, however, moved that the Welsh Sunday Closing Act be repealed, and when he was twitted with this in his own constituency what did he do? He told them that nothing could be done unless some public body passed a resolution to strengthen his hands, and he invited the Corporation of Cardiff to do this, but from that day to this the Cardiff Corporation has declined to respond to his

appeal. At the municipal election which followed, the number of members of the Cardiff Corporation returned in favour of Sunday closing was increased. We have had a number of Commissions appointed to inquire into the allegations as to the working of the Sunday Closing Acts in every country in which they have been enforced, and they have all reported that the allegations as to the failure of those Acts were unfounded, that they were a success, and that they were supported by a majority of the people to whom they applied. The last Commission reported unanimously in favour of those Acts. Upon that Commission there were eight members representing the liquor trade, and not one of them recommended that a single one of the Sunday Closing Acts should be repealed. I do not think a stronger proof that the trade admits these Acts are a success could be brought forward. The hon. Member who has moved the rejection of this Bill suggested that Glamorganshire is more drunken because of the Sunday Closing Act. If that is so why does he not come down to this House and move the repeal of the Act? Why does not the County Council of Glamorganshire and the Town Council of Cardiff come forward and ask for the repeal of that Act? The Commission reported in 1889 that the Act was a great success. In that year eleven out of twelve county councils in Wales passed resolutions in favour of the continuation of the Act; seven town councils, including Cardiff, also supported the measure, and fifteen school boards, twelve local boards, and five boards of guardians petitioned in favour of the measure, and not a single local authority in Wales sent a memorial objecting to it. There were only three petitions against it, and two of them were from Cardiff publicans. We are told that Sunday closing has created shebeens in Cardiff, and caused the formation of a large number of clubs, and that the people who otherwise would have been drinking in the public-houses have been driven into the shebeens and clubs, and that there is in consequence a great deal of illegal drinking going on. I think it is interesting that we should ascertain who goes to the shebeens and who run them, and upon this point we have had the evidence of the Chief Constable of Cardiff, in which he gives us a list of the people who kept the shebeens and frequented them,

and here is the list. In the year 1896 106 persons were convicted for keeping shebeens in Cardiff. Of those 106 persons twenty-one were convicted thieves, seventeen had been convicted for assaults, thirteen were convicted brothel-keepers, twenty-four were prostitutes, twelve were convicted beersellers, and only nineteen were persons who had not been previously proceeded against. What were the characters of those found frequenting the shebeens? Although there were 106 convictions there were only 150 found frequenting them. Of this 150 thirty-six were convicted thieves, seven had been convicted of assaults, five were brothel-keepers, twenty-eight prostitutes, five were convicted beersellers, and sixty-nine were persons who had not been previously proceeded against. So that out of a total of 256 persons convicted for keeping these shebeens and frequenting them, two-thirds of that number had already figured in the police court. Do I understand the hon. Member for Cardiff to say that those are the class of persons who would have been found in the public-houses on Sundays had they been open?

MR. MACLEAN: Surely the hon. Member does not class those people as frequenters of legitimate public-houses?

MR. WHITTAKER: I am dealing with shebeens at present. The argument is that the people are drinking there in consequence of the public-houses being closed; but are we to keep public-houses open for such people as brothel-keepers, prostitutes, and convicted thieves? Are these the sort of people that public-houses are to cater for? Mr. H. L. Stephen, a barrister, and the son of the late Sir James Stephen, accompanied by the representative of a Conservative paper in Cardiff, went the round of these shebeens in Cardiff to visit them, and this newspaper was one which had been prominent in opposing Sunday closing for Wales. Mr. Stephen afterwards wrote an article in the *Fortnightly Review*, giving the result of his visits, and he said he was unable to find a single shebeen which was not a brothel. Cardiff is a seaport, and you

know the class of people who visit it. I may point out that out of the 106 convictions I have alluded to ninety-eight were in the docks district, and there were scarcely any in the other part of the town. It is clear from this that it was not the working men of Cardiff who frequented these shebeens, but it was the scum of the place who fattened on the sailors they could lay hold of. Therefore, there was no demand on behalf of the working men of Cardiff for liquor in these shebeens. My hon. friend the Member for West Denbighshire stated that in towns in England there were more clubs in proportion to the population than in Cardiff, and when he made that statement another hon. Member interrupted with the query—"What is the number of members?" I went out to get those numbers. My hon. friend quoted Cardiff, Bradford, and Oldham. Now the number of members in the clubs in Cardiff is 15,000, in Oldham 17,000, and in Bradford 24,000. I deny the hon. Member's contention that clubs are the outcome of the Sunday Closing Act. During the last fifteen years clubs have spread all over the country with great rapidity, but to represent them as being the result of Sunday closing is totally wrong. We have been told that Cardiff is "honeycombed" with clubs, but I find that in 1897 there were only thirty clubs in Cardiff, and I do not think you can honeycomb a large town with thirty clubs. Bolton has 34 clubs, Halifax 47, Huddersfield 59, Oldham 69, Rochdale 27, Burnley 30, Bradford 81, Leeds 69, and Stockport 34. Therefore, the number of clubs in Cardiff is not particularly large as compared with other large towns in this country, and the growth of clubs is not owing to the Sunday Closing Acts. London—where the hours for the sale of drink are longer than anywhere else in the country—has more clubs than the whole of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales put together, and this is certainly not caused by Sunday closing. The number of clubs in England has doubled in ten years, and that is not owing to Sunday closing. If Sunday closing is producing more clubs, how is it that there are three Welsh counties where there are no clubs, three counties with two clubs, two with four clubs, and two with five clubs? Besides these figures there are ten counties in Wales with only twenty-four clubs, and ten out of the twenty-four are not open on Sundays at

all. Therefore, to say that these clubs are for Sunday drinking is a fallacy entirely. Then again, eleven out of the twenty-four clubs have a subscription of £1 a year or upwards, and you cannot call such a club a working man's club for Sunday drinking. These figures prove, as all close examinations of the question have proved, that the allegations in favour of Sunday closing will not bear examination and are unfounded. There is one other reason why we should give Sunday closing. We ought to do a good deal for the regulation of the trade for the benefit of those engaged in it, to promote their well-being and their health. The publicans' trade is the deadliest known in this country, and there is no other trade in which the death rate is so high. The death rate of the potters of Staffordshire, and the workers amongst chemical processes is even lower than those employed in the publicans' trade. They are the most drunken class among the community, and the death rate amongst them is ten times greater in London than among the ordinary community, and in the industrial districts of the country it is seven times greater. Can we do nothing to lessen the pressure upon that trade and give them a clear Sunday? The objection has been raised that this is a piecemeal measure. In this respect I do feel it a difficulty, for we are grumbled at when we ask too much, and we are also grumbled at if we ask for too little. This measure is largely one of administration to facilitate dealing with a very difficult border line, which has been recommended by all the other sections concerned, and I hope that the Government will give their support to this measure. My hopes of temperance legislation from the present Government are not very great, but I hope they will give us something, and if they will not give us this measure recommended by the Royal Commission I am afraid they will not give us anything at all, although I am very unwilling to believe that. I hope a large majority of this House will support the Second Reading of this measure.

*MR. TRITTON (Lambeth, Norwood): I find myself this afternoon in a somewhat novel position, for in regard to this Bill I am myself in complete accord and con-

Mr. Whitaker.

cord with some of the leading representatives of the trade who were placed on the Royal Commission. They say that they do not approve of Sunday closing at the present time for the whole of the country, but that they are in favour of Monmouthshire being included in the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. Therefore, I find that I have no difficulty whatever to waive any little feeling I might have against total Sunday closing for England when I can quote such names as those of Mr. Buxton and other distinguished members of the Royal Commission in favour of this experiment. Finding myself in that position, perhaps I may be allowed to trespass upon the indulgence of the House this afternoon in order to give one or two reasons for giving my cordial support to the Bill before the House. I wish to back up the opinions expressed by the two younger Members of our party who have spoken in favour of this Bill this afternoon. I am glad that they have realised, as many other hon. Members are realising, what the trend of public opinion really is, and what a terrible state of things exists in the country. I hope other hon. Members on this side will not be ashamed to stand up alongside those two younger Members and give their voice and vote in favour of any proposals which will remedy the evil. I want to say a few words as an ardent admirer of the Report of the Royal Commission. Naturally, I attach much more importance to the Majority Report than to the Minority Report, because the latter is signed by earnest and enthusiastic gentlemen, who, like myself, are gentlemen whose views are known, and hon. Members know what we are likely to say; but when I saw what the leading trade representatives – and they were picked men who were known to be capable of fighting a good battle for the trade – said, my heart leaped with joy when I read the introductory paragraph to that Report. I was speaking to an hon. Member the other day who said he never took any interest in temperance questions, as a rule, and was not in favour of Sunday closing; but he said he had been reading the Report of the Royal Commission, and he had now altered his opinion. I therefore hope other hon. Members will take the trouble to read that Report, and especially the introductory paragraph. In that paragraph they describe drunken-

ness as a "gigantic evil" and "a national degradation," and I never said anything so strong as that upon a temperance platform. I think those words, coming from such a quarter, fully justify the existence of every temperance society in our land, and justify every temperance speech delivered on every temperance platform. I also think they justify every bit of work, be it great or small, that temperance workers have put themselves to in order to bring about a better state of things and redeem our national character. As an admirer of the Report of the Royal Commission, I want to support the Second Reading. I also want to support it as a loyal and sincere Conservative. There was one politician who in his time did more, perhaps, than anyone else in the dark days of the Conservative party to restore it to the proud position which it holds in this land of ours at the present moment—I mean the late Lord Randolph Churchill. In the first address he issued to the electors of Woodstock in 1874, he said—

"The principles of true Conservatism I hold to be those of gradual increasing progress, adhering strictly to the lines of a well-founded constitution, and avoiding all violent and unnecessary changes."

This measure is not a violent or unnecessary change, but it is a gradual reform which, if carried, will be a great blessing to those it is intended to benefit. In November, 1888, speaking on social problems at Paddington, Lord Randolph Churchill spoke of the excessive sale of liquor as—

"the direct parent of more than one half the crime of this country, and of two-thirds of the poverty and misery, disease, and the vice which tarnishes and disgraces our English civilisation."

He, being dead, yet speaketh, and I hope many hon. Members will be found on this side of the House who will echo those sentiments. I believe in promoting not only Imperial security but also national welfare, and I know nothing which casts such a blot upon our national escutcheon as the drink question. As a progressive Conservative who wishes to see the party he belongs to alter their views upon this question, and as one who regards this problem as one of the most important questions of social reform, I shall most heartily support the Second Reading of

this Bill. Lastly, I venture to support the Second Reading of this Bill as one who is strongly in favour of all just, fair, and equitable temperance reforms. I have never been in favour of extreme measures, and when in 1893 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire brought in his Local Veto Bill* I addressed a few words to the House in opposition to it. I may say also that I have never been in favour of the prohibitive proposals of the hon. Member for Cockermouth. We temperance legislators have been put off a great deal within the last three years, and we have been told from our front bench repeatedly in the past that Parliament cannot do anything until the Report of the Royal Commission is issued. But they cannot say that to-day, and I hope that Her Majesty's Government, at any rate, will not make this a party question. Let us take this great national question, which oppresses so heavily this land of ours, out of the range of party politics altogether, and see if we cannot do something to deal with it. There are many sad homes in England to-day upon which the dark cloud of bereavement is resting very heavily. Thank God, in some of them there is a silver lining, for although you may find in them sorrow and suffering, yet they find consolation in telling you how gallantly their lost one had fallen fighting for Queen and country on some South African blood-stained battlefield; and as we offer our words of sympathy to them we can say, at any rate, "Your loss is the country's loss, and we shall never forget that you gave your husband or your son in the country's hour of trial." But there are other homes in this land of ours in which you may go and find the dark cloud of sorrow and bereavement resting upon them, but there is no silver lining. They have taken his picture down, and they say to you, "Don't ask anything about him; it would be kinder not to mention him. He fell a victim to drink." They would rather draw a veil over him. There is no gallant record of a life laid down in his country's service, but only a sad record of disgrace, misery, and death. I have been behind the

* See debate on motion for leave to introduce the Liquor Traffic (Local Control) Bill, 27th February, 1893. (*The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. ix., page 476); Bill withdrawn 18th September, 1893 (Vol. xvii., page 1575).

scenes upon this question, and many a sad story has come under my notice, therefore I speak strongly upon a subject in which I have taken a deep interest for over twenty years. Therefore, I am going to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill, and as long as I am spared to be a Member of this House, whatever message I may get from outside parties, I shall always unhesitatingly give my vote and voice in favour of any good, reasonable, just and equitable Bills legislating in this direction, believing as I do that they will tend to the welfare of our land and promote the prosperity of our people.

MR. CHARLES MORLEY (Brecknockshire) said he had no wish to trespass on the patience of the House, but as a Welsh Member, and as one who took a deep interest in the measure, he wished very briefly to press one aspect of the question on the consideration of hon. Members. While he cordially supported the Bill on what he might briefly describe as general temperance grounds, he desired specially to enlist the sympathy of the House on behalf of the large numbers of his constituents who at the present time, and, indeed, for many years past, had suffered great injustice. The House was, of course, familiar with the Local Government Act of 1888, and would remember that by one of its provisions portions of Brecknockshire were transferred for certain purposes to Monmouth, with the result that while from 1881 to 1888 the whole county had enjoyed Sunday closing, from 1888 to the present day portions of the county were deprived of those benefits to which the people believed they were morally and legally entitled. At the present time in Beaufort, an industrial centre, the public-houses, which used to be shut, are now open, and large numbers of persons flock into the town on Sundays to obtain the drink which they cannot obtain in their own locality. He had received large numbers of petitions in favour of the Bill, and while personally in favour of the principle of Sunday closing, though it might not be capable of universal application, he specially desired to see this Bill pass, as it would be of great benefit to Monmouth and an act of justice too long delayed to the county of Brecknock.

Mr. Trillon.

*CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS (Devonshire, Torquay): I am extremely glad to be able to give a vote on this measure, not only in accordance with my election pledges but also with my convictions. I said that I never would vote for a Bill that would tend to increase drunkenness, and on that ground I shall have no hesitation in going into the lobby against this Bill. The Bill under discussion aims directly at the liberty and free will of the working classes. It does not affect the richer classes, but it says to the working man, "You, whom we believe to be capable of deciding all the most important questions of Imperial and domestic policy, are not fit to decide whether you will drink a glass of beer or not on a Sunday." I agree with the remarks made by the hon. Member for the Denbighshire district who moved the rejection of this Bill. He pointed out that it was bound to interfere with those who only wished to gratify their natural appetites, but that it would not prevent those that were inclined to do so from indulging to excess. I believe that this Bill will tend to promote secret drinking, which is, I think, in the opinion of everybody competent to form any judgment, the worst form of drinking that can occur. We hear a great deal about police reports, but I am not inclined to attach so much importance to police statistics as some people do, because, in the first place, the police carry out their duties differently in different localities. In some parts of the country a man is considered drunk and is arrested or summoned when he is only "slightly disguised in liquor." In other districts the police require almost that a man shall fall on the ground and stretch out his arms to feel if he can fall any lower before he can be declared to be drunk. I have seen in Scotland a whole town full of drunken people on a Saturday.

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): Will the hon. Gentleman name the town?

*CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS: Certainly; it is the city of Perth.

MR. HEDDERWICK: On what date?

*CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS: I have not got the date, but it happened to be a holiday at the conclusion of some Dundee excursion. I think this Bill amounts to a very strong condemnation of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. It is argued that the Welsh Sunday Closing Acts are evaded by a large number of workmen who trip across the border in order to get drunk, and return in that condition to their native county. That shows that a very large number of the working classes in the adjoining county do not appreciate the boon that we are told the majority of the inhabitants of Wales value so much. A few days ago during the debate on the Queen's Speech, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin gave this House some very excellent advice, for he said, "Let us clear our minds of cant." Now, if there is one class of legislation more than another to which this advice is applicable it is questions dealing with temperance reform, because I hold most strongly that cant enters into debates on temperance questions more than upon any other subject. Hon. Members opposite who have spoken in support of this Bill contend that it is in the interest of working men; but how do they arrive at that conclusion? I gather from listening to the speech of the hon. Member who introduced the Bill that certain meetings had been held in support of the measure, but he was careful to explain, when his figures were challenged, that they were not representative public meetings, but were meetings held after evening service in certain free churches. I should like to know how many of the persons voting on those occasions were adult males, because those are the people for whom this Bill is chiefly intended. There is no doubt whatever that one result that will ensue from this Bill will be that those persons who do require liquor either moderately or immoderately will evade the law, and I contend that is bad for this country and bad for the cause of temperance to pass legislation which will be evaded by a considerable portion of the population. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire said he had learned a great deal since the year 1872, and I do not doubt it for one moment. I often wonder whether the right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his studies, has ever heard the

song called "The Vicar of Bray." In that song there is a certain person who changes his opinions pretty freely to suit the occasion, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite seems to have changed his opinions very considerably. When my hon. friend the Member for Denbighshire quoted the speech of the right hon. Gentleman made in 1872, I thought I never heard a more eloquent or complete answer to the Bill that we are now invited to read a second time. I can only say that I will never vote for any Bill affecting the working classes primarily that I should consider unjust, unfair, or tyrannical if applied to myself. I am far too much of a Conservative for that, and I leave that sort of thing for hon. Members opposite who are prepared to treat the working classes of this country as if they were not fit to be trusted. In conclusion, I would only say that, to my mind, there is only one way to promote temperance in this country, and that is by promoting habits and ideas of self-respect. As this Bill is a coercive measure, and as I am opposed to coercion in any form, I shall oppose the Second Reading of this Bill.

*ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne):

It is a common occurrence for naval men to differ, and I do not agree with the reasons which the hon. and gallant Member who has just sat down has given for his own vote. I will not, however, pursue that question any further. Hon. Members may think I am embarrassed on this question, but I am not at all. I am opposed to total Sunday closing for the whole of this country. I have answered in common with every other hon. Member certain questions at election time, and I made no concealment of my views, for I stated that I was in favour of further restrictions on Sunday drinking, and yet the trade supported me. In this matter I only know of one argument to be advanced against this Bill, and I admit that, logically, it is a rather strong argument. It is that this is a proposal for legislation by detachment, detaching one county from another. As a rule I should be strongly opposed to that kind of legislation, and I believe that on former occasions I have voted against measures of this kind, but under very different

conditions. The Government appointed a Royal Commission, presided over by Lord Peel, and I have been very much influenced by the Report of that Commission. If hon. Members are not to be influenced by Reports of Royal Commissions, in Heaven's name, why appoint them? We have a Minority Report and a Majority Report upon the many points connected with that Commission, but we have a unanimous Report in favour of this proposal before the House. Am I to set my judgment against the unanimous Report of the Royal Commission, which has heard all kinds of evidence and witnesses, and which has been able to sift the question from top to bottom? I am opposed to legislation by detachment, and I am in favour of allowing this question to be dealt with by local authorities. I would oppose tomorrow with all my power the idea of Sunday closing irrespective of localities and surrounding circumstances. It would be impossible to have a total Sunday Closing Bill for seaports and garrison towns or for the metropolis of this Empire. It is, nevertheless, quite possible to legislate and grant this power in districts far removed from military or naval surroundings, where the people desire to have Sunday closing, and where they can carry public opinion with them. If that be so, then let the local authority representing that local opinion have the power to deal with this question. Here we have this Bill not only supported strongly by the Royal Commission in the Minority and Majority Report, but I am told that it is strongly supported by the County Council of Monmouthshire and all the local authorities. In spite of my former opposition to total Sunday closing, and holding as I do these views, I believe that this is a proper tribunal to set up. I feel very strongly that further restriction on the sale of liquor is necessary, a fact which you recognise on Sundays by closing public-houses during Divine service in the morning, and to be logical you ought to close them during Divine service in the evening. I have had forty years experience in licensing matters, and have initiated a good many reforms, and I would initiate this in every county in the country under similar circumstances. I shall warmly support the Bill.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have listened with much satisfaction to the
Admiral Field,

recent naval encounter, and I congratulate my hon. and gallant friend who has just sat down on having successfully rammed the rather old-fashioned craft with which he has had to deal. This Bill stands, I think, in a favourable position. It is a measure which has been recommended by a Majority Report and by a Minority Report, and I am happy to say that in the discussion we have had this afternoon we have received from the majority side of this House as strong support as we have received from the minority side. Those who take an interest in the question of temperance must have heard with satisfaction, and, I think, with some emotion, the speech of the hon. Member for Norwood, whose devotion to that cause we have long known in this House. I confess I share with him the satisfaction at the speeches of two of the younger Members of this House sitting upon the other side—the Member for Ayr Burghs, and my hon. friend the Member for Stowmarket—and I am glad to think that it is among the younger Members that these principles are establishing themselves. I wish also to make it clear what this Bill is and what it is not. This Bill is not a general Sunday Closing Bill. I have never myself supported a general compulsory Sunday Closing Bill. It is a Bill for Sunday closing in a special part of the country. It has been said that we ought not to deal with special parts of the country, but that we must wait for a general universal measure. I very much agree with my hon. friend who said it was very difficult to please those who are against all temperance reform, because at one time they say you are attempting too much and at another time they say you are attempting too little. This is one of the occasions on which the attempt is a very limited one; but is it contrary to any principle of legislation that you should deal with parts of the country which were ripe for that legislation if you believe that legislation in that direction at all was beneficial to the country? You have the experience of nearly half a century of this legislation in Scotland, and there is not a single man, not even in the city of Perth, who would propose to repeal that Sunday Closing Act. So that, if experience is worth anything at all, if statesmanship is good for anything, you will judge of

the operation of such a measure where it has been tried in large communities like that of Scotland. There we have districts with great populations like Glasgow and Edinburgh, where this measure has been in operation for many years, and the testimony of the whole population is in favour of it. You applied to the same principle to Ireland, and has anybody proposed to repeal it in those parts of Ireland to which this legislation has been applied? The main opposition to this Bill has come from the hon. Member for West Clare, and he has made an appeal to Her Majesty's Government in favour of the trade. We have yet to learn the reason for that appeal. Such legislation for Wales, he said, did not allow a Bill of this kind to be properly dealt with by a Private Member's Bill. I would point out that the legislation already passed on this subject for the whole of Wales was a Private Member's Bill, and it was introduced by the father of my hon. friend who has spoken. Therefore those objections do not hold water. It is really difficult to make out what are the arguments against the Bill. The hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill we are told is about to remove himself from the representation of Wales. Therefore we are not bound to take him as our spokesman. But he cast ridicule upon the meetings which have been held in support of this Bill, and said that they did not at all represent public opinion. But it is not meetings alone. I think I may say that the responsible representative bodies in the county of Monmouth, including its county council, corporations, and the urban councils in all those thickly populated mining districts, have expressed themselves in favour of the measure. Then it is said that it is a hardship upon the working men and the miners. But only this morning I have received a resolution from the Ebbw Vale branch of the South Wales Miners' Federation strongly supporting the Bill, and therefore to say that it is a hardship on the working men in those districts is utterly untrue. If the miners of Wales are hostile to this Sunday closing, would they not have had a demand from them for the repeal of the legislation? There is no body of men more capable or more able to make their wishes known than the miners of Monmouthshire and the whole of South Wales, and where you have great industrial populations of this

character living under legislation of this sort, with which they are satisfied and which they would not for a moment allow to be repealed, we have the most conclusive evidence that the public opinion of the community is in favour of legislation of this sort. My hon. friend who moved this Bill mentioned a fact which concerns one of the principal places in my constituency, and here is the letter received from the clerk, stating that the motion was seconded and supported by two members of the trade. I think the House may take it on the assurance of those who have the means of knowing, who are the representatives of Monmouthshire, that the opinion of that county is almost unanimously in favour of this measure. That opinion is worth having, and the reason why the people are so much in favour of it is because they have had the experience of their neighbours. They have the experience of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales to guide them, and so far as we can judge from those communities, Sunday closing has proved very satisfactory. Then we have a county which, practically speaking, is part of Wales. The whole sentiment of that part which I have the honour to represent in this House is Welsh, and a great number of the people speak Welsh only. For the purposes of education they are put on the footing of Wales, though for some other purposes they stand on an English footing. Why should they be cut off from legislation granted to their neighbours and with which they are satisfied? It has been objected that this is piecemeal legislation. Well, temperance legislation always has been piecemeal, but that is no objection to it in my opinion. Then we are told that it is an infringement of the liberty of the subject. That is the singular contention of the opponents of the Bill, but if it is an infringement of the liberty of the subject, in that case the liberty of Scotland was invaded, the liberty of all the counties in Ireland was invaded, and all the counties of Wales as well. A more ludicrous and preposterous argument was never advanced, because no one thinks that if the Bill passes the liberty of the subject will be infringed or invaded, and all we ask is that the liberty of the subject in Monmouth shall be put on the same footing as the liberty of the subject in Wales. There is one argument that has had some effect upon those not acquainted with the matter. It has been said Sunday closing

promoted secret drinking, drinking clubs, and shebeens, but that argument has been very fully refuted by the hon. Member for Denbighshire. It has been shown that those clubs are not the fruit of Sunday closing. In the large English towns drinking clubs exist mainly, it is said, because of the prescribed limitation of the hours of drink. Then take the shebeens. You do not propose to repeal the Excise Laws because shebeens exist. When one comes to look at the arguments against this measure there is nothing in them. The fact is there is no substantial reason for resisting the demand of the people of Monmouthshire in this matter. There is one appeal that I would make to the Members of the House of Commons, who for the most part profess themselves in this House, and universally outside it, in favour of temperance. Is there nothing you can do by way of statute in favour of temperance? One hon. Member made a vigorous appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary in favour of the trade. I make an appeal, not for the same purpose, but one which I hope will have more effect, in favour of the people of Monmouth, who are, I believe, infinitely more deserving. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman knows, I am certain he must know, what I know—that drink is the most fertile source of all evil and crime in this country, and hundreds of thousands of people are asking you to assist them in defending themselves against that evil, and I hope that the English Government and the English Home Secretary will not stand in the way of its removal. The right hon. Gentleman has the power to pass the Bill if he chooses to exercise it. His is a great responsibility. It will be asked in the future what this Parliament, with its great majority and powerful Government, has done for temperance. This Parliament is drawing to its close, and will it be recorded of it in its later stage that when this request in favour of temperance was proposed this Government and this Parliament, with its great majority, refused to listen to that prayer? I do not believe that it will. We have had the Commission, a capable Commission, of men of all sorts and notions, and representing the liquor trade in considerable number. That Commission met and made a Report differing, it is true, upon many points, but agreeing upon the one

subject of the Bill. This question is now submitted to our consideration, and I do entreat the House and implore the Government to show the people of this country that their hearts are in favour of the cause of temperance, and that this small measure now asked for will not be refused.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I will reply briefly to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, and explain the view I take. We have heard the appeal and the remarks made by my hon. friend behind me and other hon. Members on the general ground of temperance; but I venture to remind the House that this is not the particular subject before it. There is some doubt as to whether this particular measure would in effect be in favour of temperance. Many references have been made to the Royal Commission, and it was my special duty, as the Minister responsible for the consideration of the Report, to look into it with a view to seeing if legislation would be practicable under existing circumstances to carry out some of its recommendations. To the great regret of myself and my colleagues I could not see my way under the particular circumstances of this year to enter on a question the right hon. Gentleman will know from experience to be a very thorny one. Though much has been said of the agreement in the Reports of the majority and minority of the Commission, I have found that among the parties represented, and from the point of view of practical legislation, there is a wider difference of opinion now than when the Report was first presented. I only say this by way of excuse, if excuse be necessary, for the Government are fully sensible of their obligations, and desirous of doing something to promote the cause of temperance. I do not wish to go into all the figures put forward by the hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill, or into the question whether the Sunday Closing Act in Wales has been of the advantage to the general cause of temperance some of its advocates claim for it. I do not wish to go behind the Reports of Lord Balfour's Commission of 1889 and of the recent Royal Commission, which, in general terms, did say that the Sunday

Sir William Harcourt,

Closing Act of 1881 was generally accepted in Wales, and that, in the rural districts at all events, it was effective, though there were difficulties and abuses in populous districts. I think we may take it as an accomplished fact that no party in Wales desires the repeal of the Sunday Closing Act. And certainly I do not believe any party in England desires to propose such a repeal. It was established for the benefit of the people of Wales, and apparently, though it has not given the same satisfaction as the Forbes Mackenzie Act in Scotland or the Act in Ireland, it is still perfectly true to say that no party desires to repeal it. Therefore I am not prepared to urge from the point of view of Wales the liberty of the subject argument, though I do attach some importance to that argument in England. I know that in some parts of the country in rural districts people are prepared to accept some kind of Sunday closing or a further restriction of hours, but I am sure that a Sunday Closing Bill for the whole country would be opposed to public feeling, and that it could not be carried out, for it would most distinctly be held to be a violation of the liberty of the subject. From the point of view of an English Member, taking the most judicial view I can, and being not in favour of the principle of Sunday closing I am not anxious to extend it to a county in England, for, whatever the right hon. Gentleman opposite and others may say, Monmouthshire is an English county.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The Welsh do not think so.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: And when the Bill was before the House in 1881 a colleague of the right hon. Gentleman proposed to exclude Monmouthshire on this ground, and the House supported that view. But in Monmouthshire there is a considerable minority opposed to the Bill.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: What evidence is there of that?

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: The statements of the hon. Member who moved

the rejection of the Bill, which have not been contradicted, that in public meetings in Newport and elsewhere resolutions against the Bill had been carried.

*MR. SPICER said that the two meetings held at Monmouth and Newport were composed entirely of licensed victuallers, and that the other two were public meetings arranged by the trade.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I have no evidence that the population generally of Monmouthshire desire the Bill. On the contrary, the feeling in its favour seems to be far from unanimous. In view of the report of the Royal Commission I do not wish to labour opposition to the Bill, and, speaking for the Government, I do not desire to offer opposition to the Second Reading. Looking at the Report of Lord Balfour's Commission, which I do not read at length, it is, I think, scarcely right to say the majority and minority on Lord Peel's Commission were both in favour of total Sunday closing for the whole of Monmouthshire. The words of the Majority Report are—

“There is a strong local desire in Monmouthshire to be associated with Wales in the matter of Sunday closing. We consider that this wish should be acceded to, especially as regards urban districts situated near the border.”

The Report of Lord Balfour's Commission was similarly qualified, *e.g.*—

“And we think the best way of dealing with this difficult is to make sure that, in urban districts situated on the border one law should prevail.”

Further observations follow, but I only cite those words to show that the majority in the Commission, although in favour of further curtailment of the hours for the sale of drink on Sunday, were not necessarily in favour of Sunday closing in Monmouthshire generally. I will not go into the question whether Sunday closing has been a success, although I have my own views on the subject. But I am willing to accept the views of the Commission which has inquired into the subject. I agree that when Parliament appoints Royal Commissioners it should do its best to accept their decisions; but I do not myself see in the recommendations of the recent Commissioners sufficient ground for accepting this Bill, and, personally, I shall vote against it. I do not agree with the

proposed absorption, for the purpose of Sunday closing, of Monmouthshire into Wales, or the extension of Sunday closing. It would not be right for the Government to offer any advice or to put any pressure on the House, but, speaking for myself, I shall vote against the Second Reading of the Bill.

*SIR J. LENG (Dundee) desired to say a few words in support of the Bill. For forty-seven years throughout the whole

of Scotland the Forbes Mackenzie Act had been in force, and feeling was strongly in favour of its maintenance. Even the publicans would regard it as a serious grievance if any attempt were made to alter it. In Scotland the people would rejoice to see its principle extended all over the kingdom.

The House divided:—Ayes, 188; Noes, 124. (Division List No. 66.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John Geo. Alexander
Baker, Sir John
Balcarres, Lord
Banes, Major George Edward
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Bethell, Commander
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bousfield, William Robert
Brown, Alexander H.
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles

Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Chas. (Glasgow)
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carew, James Laurence
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Cawley, Frederick
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasg'w)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. L. H.
Crombie, John William

Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardig' n)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Duckworth, James
Dunn, Sir William

Edwards, Owen Morgan
Ellis, John Edward
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, S. T. (Glamorgan)

Fardell, Sir T. George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fry, Lewis

Gilliat, John Saunders
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gurdon, Sir William Brampton

Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hardy, Laurence
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, Henry
Hogan, James Francis
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)

Jacoby, James Alfred
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Sw'nsea)
Jones, William (Carnarv'nshire)

Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Kitson, Sir James
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumb'land)

Lea, Sir T. (Londonderry)
Lecky, Rt. Hon. Wm. Edw. H.
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Sir Leonard
M'Arthur, W. (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, James
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Maddison, Fred.
Malcolm, Ian
Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks.)
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morley, C. (Breckenshire)
Morley, Rt. Hon. J. (Montrose)

Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans

O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay

Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Philipps, John Wynford
Pickard, Benjamin
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pilkington, R. (Lancs.)
Pilkington, Sir Geo. A. (Lancs. SW)
Plunkett, Rt. Hn. Horace Curzon

Randell, David
Reckitt, Harold James
Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)

Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Savory, Sir Joseph
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)

Sir M. White Ridley.

Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sinclair, Capt John (Forfarshire)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Souttar, Robinson
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
 Stanley, Sir Henry M. (Lambeth)
 Steadman, William Charles
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)

Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Ure, Alexander
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, J. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wason, Eugene
 Wedderburn, Sir William

Weir, James Galloway
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
 Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh., N.)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
 Woods, Samuel

Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Mr. Spicer and Mr. Tritton.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
 Arnold, Alfred
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)

Baldwin, Alfred
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. Smith (Hunts)
 Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
 Beach, Rt. Hn. W. W. B. (Hants)
 Beckett, Ernest William
 Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
 Boulnois, Edmund
 Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
 Bowles, T. G. (King's Lynn)
 Brassey, Albert
 Butcher, John George

Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Charrington, Spencer
 Coddington, Sir William
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Cooke, C. W. R. (Hereford)
 Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
 Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
 Crilly, Daniel
 Cross, H. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
 Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
 Curzon, Viscount

Doogan, P. C.
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart

Faber, George Denison
 Ferguson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
 Finch, George H.
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Flower, Ernest

Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gold, Charles
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
 Gretton, John
 Greville, Hon. Ronald

Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Helder, Augustus
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstead)
 Hudson, George Bickersteth

Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
 Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton

Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
 Kimber, Henry
 Knowles, Lees

Laurie, Lieut-General
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Leighton, Stanley
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman

Macaleese, Daniel
 Macdona, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 Maclean, James Mackenzie
 MacLure, Sir John William
 M'Dermott, Patrick
 Marks, Henry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Milbank, Sir Powlett Chas. Jno.
 Monekton, Edward Philip
 Monk, Charles James
 More, Robert J. (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hon. F. (Monm'tsh.)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)

Mount, William George
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Myers, William Henry

Newdigate, Francis Alexander

O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Malley, William

Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp

Quilter, Sir Cuthbert

Rasch, Major Frederic C.
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Robinson, Brooke
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley

Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Spencer, Ernest
 Stanley, Ed. Jas. (Somerset)
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, W. Ewd. Murray
 Usborne, Thomas

Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir W. H.
 Ward, Hon. Robert A. (Crewe)
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Tauntn)
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
 Williams, J. Powell. (Birm.)
 Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Howell and Major
 Jameson.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Nicoll.*)

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am rather sorry the hon. Member has not explained this Bill, because there is really much in it which is eminently useful. At the same time, everybody will understand that it is impossible for me to allow the Second Reading of the Bill to be taken after the discussion that is possible on this occasion. On the general question we have had sufficient experience of the working of the Local Government (Scotland) Acts of 1889 and 1894 to enable us to say that we are within sight of the time when some amendment of those Acts will become necessary. But I am certain that this is not a measure that would be universally popular in Scotland.

It being half-past Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES ACT (1891) AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for Wednesday next.

WAR LOAN BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported; without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow.

OSSETT GAS BILL.

Reported [Parties do not proceed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the Motion for Adjournment,

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I believe something has been said about certain Bills which it is proposed to take to-morrow night.

*THE PATRONAGE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir WILLIAM WALROND, Devonshire, Tiverton): The Government proposes to take on Thursday the Third Reading of the War Loan Bill, the Committee stage of the Census Bill, the Electoral Disabilities (Military Service) Bill, and the Police Reservists Bill, and the Second Reading of the Land Charges Bill and the Lunacy Bill. The Army Estimates will be taken on Friday and the Finance Bill on Monday.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 15th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—

Crystal Palace Company [H.L.]

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—

the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Avebury, and that the Earl Brownlow be chairman of the said Committee; read, and agreed to.

NEWPORT (MONMOUTHSHIRE) GAS BILL [H.L.]

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 2nd and 6th instant discharged; and Bill committed for Tuesday next.

Member.

ERRATA.

March 15th, 1900. The following question and answer have been omitted in the text:

SCOTLAND—DIS-TURNPIKED ROADS—GRANT IN AID.

SIR J. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can explain why, in the distribution of the grant in aid of dis-turnpiked roads in Scotland, counties can add to the list of highway roads taken over by them, the expense of which forms a claim on the grant, while burghs are not entitled to add to the list of their highways such as are taken over by them, so that the expense of maintaining these roads does not form a claim on the grant.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The regulations in respect of the grant referred to by the hon. Member were drawn up in 1884, after mature consideration. In terms of section 22, sub-section 2, of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889, these regulations were stereotyped as the basis of distribution, and this arrangement cannot be altered without legislation.

COWES PIER BILL [H.L.]

Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

EDINBURGH DISTRICT LUNACY BOARD BILL [H.L.]

EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL [H.L.]

ROTHERHITHE AND RATCLIFF TUNNEL BILL [H.L.]

LONDON SEA WATER SUPPLY BILL [H.L.]

SUNDERLAND CORPORATION BILL [H.L.]

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL [H.L.]

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl Brownlow be proposed to

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Read 2^a.

MERSEY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

GREAT GRIMSBY STREET TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.]

LEITH BURGH PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL [H.L.]

Read 2^a (according to order).

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EMIGRATION.

Report on the Emigrants Information Office, for the year ended December 31st, 1899. Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

2 M

An Asterisk (*)

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.

Statements of account and of life assurance and annuity business, and abstracts of actuarial reports, deposited with the Board of Trade under "The Life Assurance Companies Act, 1870," during the year ended 31st December 1899: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

INEBRIATES AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

Petition for amendment of; of Lord Provost of Dundee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

MONEY LENDING BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—BOER TREATMENT OF COLONIAL PRISONERS.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, seeing the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War in his place, I wish to put to him a question of which I have given him private notice. Some short time ago I asked him to be good enough to inquire whether there was any truth in the report that Her Majesty's colonial soldiers and Her Majesty's subjects belonging to Natal and Cape Colony, who had been defending their homes and had been taken prisoners, had been confined in convict prisons at Pretoria, or, at all events, treated in a manner quite different from that in which Her Majesty's soldiers had been treated. I should be very much obliged if the noble Marquess would now tell me whether inquiries have been made, and with what result, for I am sure every one of your Lordships will be of opinion that this matter is a most important one which does not admit of delay.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Marquess of Lansdowne): My Lords, since the noble Earl mentioned this subject to your Lordships we have received from various sources information to the effect that men belonging to Her Majesty's colonial forces are treated with greater severity than soldiers of the British Regular forces. We are endeavouring to ascertain whether this is the case. I need not assure my noble

friend that we regard the matter as a grave one, and if these statements are corroborated we shall certainly make representations in regard to the matter.

TELEGRAMS TO SOLDIERS ON SERVICE.

*THE EARL OF LICHFIELD: My Lords, I beg to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether he is able to announce any further concessions with regard to the rates for telegrams to the troops in South Africa.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am glad to say that we have received from the Eastern Telegraph Company an intimation that they are prepared to make several very important concessions in this matter. In the first place they are prepared to arrange that all messages addressed to soldiers and sailors serving in South Africa shall be sent at a reduced rate of 2s. a word instead of 4s. a word. In the next place, in the case of officers the rank, and in the case of non-commissioned officers and men the name, of the person to whom the message is addressed may at the sender's risk be omitted, the regimental number alone being given in the latter case. In the next place, the rest of the address, including Cape Town, will be charged as one word. Thus, if I may give your Lordships a concrete example, a message sent addressed "No. 3383, 2nd Battalion Wiltshire Regiment, Cape Town," would be changed as two words only. These proposals have been referred to the postal authorities at Cape Town, but I have every reason to hope that an arrangement on that basis will be immediately introduced.

*THE EARL OF LICHFIELD: I beg to thank the noble Marquess for the extremely satisfactory answer he has been able to give to my question. I am sure the concessions to which he has referred will be gratefully received throughout the country.

MILITIA RECRUITS SENT TO SOUTH AFRICA—MUSKETRY TRAINING.

*THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: I beg to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War if it is the case that Militia recruits have been sent to South Africa

without having previously gone through a recruit's course of musketry.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE:** My Lords, it is the case that some Militia-men have gone to South Africa who have not gone through the recruit's course of musketry. The recruit's course of musketry can, as the noble Duke knows, be gone through at any time during a man's first year of service, and it was thought that if all the men who had not gone through the course were left behind the result would be that the Militia battalions would be deprived of the services of a number of men who, in point of age and in other respects, were quite fit to go out with their battalions. I may remind the noble Duke that these Militia battalions are intended to do duty on the lines of communication in South Africa under conditions which will, it is expected, give them ample opportunity of going through practice in musketry. It may also, perhaps, interest him to know that on board every transport which is taking out Militia battalions a certain number of rounds of ammunition are supplied for the purpose of musketry practice on board, and I am bound to say that if a man learns to hit the mark at all under such trying circumstances he probably would become a deadly shot by the time he reached his destination in South Africa.

MILITIA EQUIPMENT.

LORD BLYTHSWOOD: My Lords, I beg to call the attention of the Secretary of State for War to the fact that Militia regiments have been sent to South Africa with old belts and equipment which has proved useless; and to ask whether new equipment should not at once be served out to these regiments. I trust my noble friend will not think for a moment that I hold him responsible, for the Militia equipment has been old for a very long period. I am confident that, had he been able, the noble Marquess would have seen that the Militia battalions were equipped as well as any of the soldiers of Her Majesty the Queen. Still, it is a matter of great importance. The equipment of the battalion which I commanded was old when it was sent to us fifteen years ago, and the names of the regiments who had worn it were upon it. It was quite obsolete, for we did not get it till another equipment was served out to the British

Army. When this battalion got to South Africa the men proceeded to scrub the equipment in order to get off the pipe-clay, and the buckles and everything else tumbled off at the same time. They were ordered to go to the Orange River the day after landing, and had to leave with their equipment all tied up with string and falling off their backs. Since then they have had to travel considerable distances, and I am sure the noble Marquess will not consider that their condition was one in which any battalion at the front should be placed.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE:** My Lords, I was somewhat at a loss, from the terms of my noble friend's question, to know what was the character of the complaint he intended to make. He speaks of Militia regiments having been sent to South Africa with old belts and with an equipment which has proved useless. Now, if the noble Lord suggests by that that Militia battalions have been sent out with worn-out and unserviceable equipment, I beg to tell him that he has been misinformed. If, on the other hand, he suggests that their equipment has been of older design than that which is issued to the greater part of the rest of the army, then he is perfectly right. The equipment of the Militia is an equipment of older date than that which the greater part of the Army possesses. It is not, however, the case that the equipment now in the hands of the Militia is not also in the hands of part of the Army. Part of the troops in India, the garrison artillery, the Army Ordnance Corps, and the Army Service Corps have, I believe, the same equipment as that now in the hands of the Militia, and, although the Militia equipment is of older pattern than that of the Army it is by no means a prehistoric equipment, nor, to the best of my belief, an unserviceable one. The new equipment has gradually been substituted for the old one in the greater part of the Army, and I hope in due time the new equipment will be given to the Militia as well as to the rest of the Army. But I have to add this, that if at the present time any part of the Militia equipment is in an unserviceable condition, it is the commanding officers of the Militia who are to blame for its being in such condition. It is clearly laid down in the Militia regulations that it is the duty of every commanding officer to see that the equipment of his

battalion is in a proper and serviceable state, and if he finds that any part of it is not in such a state it is his business to apply to the proper department for the substitution of articles necessary to make good the wear and tear of the equipment. If that has not been done the fault does not lie with the War Office, but with officers who have failed to perform duties clearly imposed upon them by the Militia regulations.

LORD BLYTHSWOOD: I should like to tell the noble Marquess that, during the twenty years I was in command of the battalion, I reported almost every year that the equipment was unserviceable in many ways, and seldom got an answer.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Five of the clock, till To-
morrow, half-past Ten of the
clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, 15th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Central London Railway.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

RUGELEY GAS BILL,

Read the third time, and passed.

ST. DAVID'S RAILWAY (ABANDONMENT) BILL.

"For the abandonment of the St. David's Railway; and for other purposes," read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitioners for Private Bills.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY.

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

The Marquess of Lansdowne.

ELECTRIC POWER BILLS (BY ORDER).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding Seven Members, to whom shall be committed the following Private Bills by which it is proposed to supply electric power :—

Lancashire Electric Power Bill ;
Durham (County of) Electric Power Supply Bill ;
South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill ;
Tyneside Electric Power Bill ;

(read a second time on Thursday, 1st March)."—(*Lord Balcarras.*)

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) said the effect of the Amendment which he proposed to move, if carried, would be that the Bill would be referred to an ordinary Select Committee of fifteen members, nominated by the House of Commons, on which both the promoters and the opponents to the Bill would be represented. Whereas the result of the motion made by the noble Lord would be that the Bill would go before a Committee supposed to be impartial but on which neither side would be able to rely. He was rather surprised at the course taken by the noble Lord having regard to the facts that after the Second Reading of the Bill the President of the Board of Trade said he would not have the Bill referred to the Private Bill Committee but to what might be called a Consultation Committee. He did not know what might be meant by that, but no consultation had taken place so far as he could see, and the great object of his Amendment would be the appointment of a Committee in which both those who were opposed and those who were favourable to the Bill would have entire confidence.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) in seconding the Amendment expressed surprise at the inaction of the Board of Trade upon the subject. The hon. right Gentleman the President when the Bill was before the House had made a suggestion, which was the basis of what subsequently occurred, that there should be a Hybrid Committee. The one thing in favour of that was that it would be composed of experts, which was very necessary in such a matter as was now before the House. He hoped that what-

ever might be done a Committee would be found which would give an impartial and expert consideration to the subject, which was of most vital importance to both the municipalities and the public.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding seven members,' in order to insert the words 'a Select Committee be appointed' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Galloway.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) supported the motion, and could not conceive a better tribunal to send a Bill to than a Committee of the character suggested by the noble Lord. Such a Committee was not subject to the loose and slippery attendance which characterised the other Committees of the House.

MR. MONK (Gloucester) hoped that the House would adopt the motion and reject the Amendment. The members of such a Committee were compelled to attend and hear evidence before they came to a decision, and if hon. Members did not attend they were reported to the House.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) believed that this was a matter deeply affecting the welfare of the people, and that the House ought to appoint a strong Committee to deal with it. It appeared to him essential that the Committee should partake of a judicial character, and the proper way to deal with the matter was to send it to the Committee of Selection, who had always performed their duty with great success. He deprecated altogether the appointment of a Committee by the ordinary procedure, under which the members of a Select Committee were appointed. One advantage of such a Committee as was proposed was the certainty of attendance. In the Police and Sanitary Committee important issues might be decided by gentlemen who had not heard the evidence, but who picked up what information they could in a hurried manner before giving their votes. This was not merely a local, it was a national question, affecting the commerce, health and welfare of the people of the country; and

the strongest possible Committee should be appointed to consider it. The only way of avoiding the difficulty of deciding questions by gentlemen who had not heard the evidence was to insist upon a full attendance of the members serving on the Committee. Perhaps attendance could not be made compulsory without notice, but at any rate the House could insist upon a full quorum of seven. He might mention that his own constituents were greatly interested in this matter, as they were proposing to spend £90,000 upon electric power undertakings.

THE PATRONAGE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir WILLIAM WALROND, Devonshire, Tiverton) thought the matter was of such great importance, that it was advisable the President of the Board of Trade should have an opportunity of expressing his views. He therefore moved the adjournment of the debate.

Debate adjourned till to-morrow.

HAMILTON BURGH BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

SOUTHPORT EXTENSION AND TRAMWAYS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from King's Lynn (two); West Lynn; and Wolverhampton; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Patricxbourne; Stanford; Wolverhampton; Glasgow; and Eccles; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions against, from Blaenavon; and North Monmouthshire (two); to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Islington; South - West Yorkshire; Rotherham; Patrichtown; Acton; Shipley; Coventry; Standford; Leeds; Oakley; Ormskirk (two); Trevethin; Abergavenny; Wolverhampton; and London; to lie upon the Table.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Galston, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AMERICAN MAILS.

Return [presented 14th March] to be printed. [No. 96.]

EMIGRATION (COLONIES).

Copy presented, of Report on the Emigrants' Information Office for the year ended 31st December, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 16th February; *Mr. Lloyd Morgan*]; to lie upon the Table.

MEDICAL COUNCILS.

Accounts presented, for 1899 of the General Medical Council and Branch Councils, and of the Dental Registration Fund [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 5th March, 1900, declaring that *Mr. Edwin Chadwick*, postmaster, Dukinfield, Post Office Department, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.

Copy presented, of Statements of Account, and of Life Assurance and Annuity Business and Abstracts of Actuarial Reports, deposited with the Board of Trade during 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 97.]

BANKING AND RAILWAY STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Banking and Railway Statistics (Ireland) to 31st December, 1899 [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 6, 1900).

Copy presented, of International Sanitary Convention. Signed at Venice, 19th March, 1899. [Ratifications deposited at Rome] [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Charitable Endowments (London).—Further Return relative thereto [ordered 2nd August, 1894; *Mr. F. S. Stevenson*]; to be printed. [No. 98.]

ARRESTS FOR DRUNKENNESS (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "giving the number of Arrests for Drunkenness within the Metropolitan Police District of Dublin and the cities of Belfast, Cork, Limerick, and Waterford on Sundays between the 1st day of May, 1898, and the 30th day of April, 1899, both days inclusive, the Arrests being given from 8 a.m. on Sundays till 8 a.m. on Mondays."

"And, similar Returns for the rest of Ireland, from the 1st day of May, 1898, to the 30th day of April, 1899 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 219, of Session 1898)."—(*Mr. William Johnston*.)

IMPERIAL YEOMANRY.

Address for "Return showing the number of Companies of Imperial Yeomanry that have been formed, the names of the Regiments and of the counties from which each Company has been raised, the number that have embarked with horses, and the number that have left either wholly or partially without horses."—(*Mr. Strachey*.)

NEW WRIT.

For the Borough of Lambeth (Brixton Division), in the room of the Hon. Evelyn Hubbard (Chiltern Hundreds). — (*Sir William Walrond*.)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

To the Marquess of Lorne, until Easter, on account of ill-health.—(*Sir William Walrond*.)

CENSUS (EXPENSES).

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any Expenses incurred for the purposes of the Census, under any Acts of the present Session for taking the Census in Great Britain and Ireland (Queen's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—BOER OVER-
TURES FOR PEACE — AMERICAN
GOOD OFFICES.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government of the United States has offered its good offices to Her Majesty's Government with a view to bringing about peace in South Africa.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The United States Chargé d'Affaires on the 13th inst. communicated to Lord Salisbury the following telegram which he had received from Mr. Hay :—

"By way of friendly good offices you will inform the British Minister for Foreign Affairs that I am to-day in receipt of a telegram from the United States Consul at Pretoria reporting that the Governments of the two African Republics request the President of the United States to intervene with a view to the cessation of hostilities; and that a similar request is made to representatives of European Powers. In communicating this request I am directed by the President of the United States to express his earnest hope that a way to bring about peace may be found, and to say that he would be glad to aid in any friendly manner to bring about so happy a result."

Lord Salisbury requested Mr. White to convey to the United States Government the sincere acknowledgments of Her Majesty's Government for the friendly tone of their communication, but stated that Her Majesty's Government does not propose to accept the intervention of any Power in the South African war.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask whether intervention was not allowed in the case of Venezuela?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

PRESS CENSORSHIP—SUPPRESSED
TELEGRAMS.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE (Carnarvon): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of

State for War whether a cablegram, cabled on 14th February to the *News*, Cape Town, by the South African Conciliation Committee, to the effect that an influential conference was held on that day supporting a vigorous Liberal policy, and expressing appreciation of the efforts of the Cape Colony and Natal ministers for peace and the conference's sense of the difficulties to Colonists and of the strain especially inflicted on the Dutch by the war, with which they are out of sympathy, has been suppressed by the censors; and under what law or regulation the legally adopted resolutions of a legal meeting have been thus suppressed.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): No information has reached this office that such a telegram was stopped by any of the censors.

MEDALS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN
SERVICE.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is under consideration to award any medal or other distinction to the officers and men who defended Ladysmith, and especially in recognition of the gallantry shown in the repulse of the attack on 6th January.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The question of the grant of medals for services in South Africa must be considered as a whole.

SELECTION OF TROOPS FOR ACTIVE
SERVICE—MANCHESTER AND WOR-
CESTERSHIRE REGIMENTS.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembrokeshire, Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for War whether the 2nd Battalion Manchester Regiment and 1st Battalion Worcestershire Regiment are part of the 8th Division now about to be despatched to South Africa, and whether the linked battalions of these two regiments are already serving there; whether there are any exceptional reasons that have induced the military authorities to select these two battalions for active service under the conditions above named, when within the last few days it has been stated that the War Office consider it is undesirable to send a battalion to South Africa if it can

be avoided when another battalion of the same regiment is already there; and what number of men it has been found necessary to draw from the Army and Militia Reserves to bring them up respectively to war strength.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The battalions in question proceed to South Africa as part of the 8th Division. They belong to four battalion regiments, in each of which two of the battalions will remain at home. They will require 456 and 498 men respectively from the Army Reserve, but none from the Militia Reserve.

GENERAL LAURIE: May I ask when the 3rd and 4th Battalions were raised?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Will the hon. and gallant Gentleman give notice of that question?

AUSTRALASIAN CONTINGENTS.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table further Papers on the subject of the contingents of mounted troops furnished by the colonies of Australia and New Zealand; whether the latter colony was not behindhand in complying with the invitation of Her Majesty's Government to send a contingent of bushmen, but had in fact anticipated that invitation; and if there are any further particulars of these acts of loyalty which he would state to the House.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): (1) Further Papers will be laid as soon as the correspondence as to the force now being raised is complete. (2) The New Zealand Government on the 3rd of February last offered, in addition to the four contingents furnished by the colony, to raise a further force of the bushmen class for general service in South Africa during the war. This offer was accepted, and the men, who will number 500, will serve on the same terms as the men now being raised by the Australian colonies. The total number offered and provided by New Zealand is 1,450. In proportion to population this would be equal to a force of 80,000 men from the United Kingdom. (3) Full information will be contained in the Papers.

WEST INDIES—OFFER OF CONTINGENTS.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) (for Mr. HEDDERWICK, Wick Burghs): On behalf of my hon. friend, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether certain of our loyal colonies in the West Indies offered to contribute contingents to our forces in the field in South Africa; and, if so, whether, with due regard to public policy, he can state the grounds upon which the offer was declined.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Such offers were made and gratefully acknowledged. Any refusal of a European contingent as, for example, from Trinidad, was mainly due to the number offered not being large enough to constitute a military unit.

MAGAZINE RIFLES.

MR. CALDWELL (for Mr. HEDDERWICK): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the service rifle now in use by our troops weighs nearly 1 lb. more than the Mauser, the Mannlicher, and the weapon of the United States Army; whether the magazine of the British rifle can only be refilled by placing single cartridges one at a time in the slot, whereas the magazine of the Mauser rifle used by the Boers can be recharged by a single movement of the hand; whether the ammunition in use for the British rifle is heavier than that in use by the leading Continental armies, and whether, in consequence, a smaller supply is carried by the British soldier than by the German, French, or Italian soldier; and whether weight of equipment and rapidity of loading are points of grave military importance.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: There are many patterns of Mannlichers and Mausers, and the British rifle is heavier than some and lighter than others. The American army rifle is $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. heavier than the British rifle. The statements made in paragraph 2 are accurate, but there are reasons for preferring the arrangements for loading which have been adopted in the British rifle. The British cartridge weighs less than either the French, German, Austrian, or American, while the British soldier carries 150 rounds, the French carries 120, the German 160, and the Italian 96. The reply to the fourth paragraph is in the affirmative.

RETIRED CAVALRY OFFICERS.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what is the number of retired cavalry officers of the rank of captain available for service under Article 486c of the Royal Warrant of 1896; what number of such officers are at present employed in connection with the war; and if it is the intention of the War Office to recall any of these officers under Article 666 of Royal Warrant, 1896, during the present emergency.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The answer to the first question is 107; to the second, 36; and to the third, in the affirmative.

DESTRUCTION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY BY THE BOERS—THREATS TO DESTROY JOHANNESBURG.

SIR ALFRED HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the statement that the Boers have wrecked the coal mines near Ladysmith, and that Government officials openly express their determination to demolish the whole of the machinery and plant of the leading gold mines, and to destroy the principal buildings in Johannesburg; and whether he will take into consideration the advisability of warning President Kruger that he will be held personally responsible for wanton damage to private property.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: (1) I have observed such statements in the newspapers. (2) The matter is under consideration, but I would remind the hon. Member that on the outbreak of the war President Kruger was warned that he and his Government were expected to protect the lives and property of all peaceable persons, and will be held responsible for any acts committed contrary to the usages of civilised people (see pages 41 and 69 of C. 9530).

CASUALTIES—WAR OFFICE COMMUNICATION WITH RELATIVES.

MR. DUCKWORTH (Lancashire, Middleton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that a Reservist from Rochdale named Kierman, who joined his regiment (the Scottish Rifles) in South Africa and was afterwards transferred to the mounted infantry at Colenso, has died of wounds

received at that place, and that his mother has had no official notification of this fact except through a letter just received from the captain of Kierman's company; and whether it is usual for the War Office to inform the nearest of kin in such cases.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The fact that Kierman had been wounded was duly notified to the regimental dépôt for report to the next of kin, but by some accident, which is much regretted, the circumstance that he died later of his wound was overlooked. The usual practice is to notify casualties to the regimental district, whence they are communicated to the next of kin.

PROMOTIONS FROM THE RANKS.

MR. SOAMES (Norfolk, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any commissions have been given to men from the ranks in connection with the war in South Africa; and, if so, how many.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: As I have already told the House, no recommendations for the promotion of men from the ranks to commissions for services in the field have yet been received from Lord Roberts.

NUMBER OF CONVALESCENT WOUNDED.

MR. WINGFIELD-DIGBY (Dorsetshire, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will give the actual or approximate number of those who have been returned wounded since the commencement of the war, who are already cured of their wounds and back again at the front.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I can give figures up to the 2nd February, which are as follows:—Wounded: officers, 261; non-commissioned officers and men, 4,583. Returned to duty: officers, 67; non-commissioned officers and men, 705. These figures do not include casualties in Ladysmith and Kimberley since investment.

MARTIAL LAW—DUTCH PRISONERS AT SIMONSTOWN.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give any further

information respecting the three persons who were taken back into a proclaimed district after application had been made to the High Court at Cape Town, as to whom a writ of *habeas corpus* was subsequently issued by the High Court and made returnable on Monday last.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir A. Milner informed me on the 6th instant that he had received a report from the military authorities to the effect that the general officer commanding Orange River had been carefully into the case of the three men and had ordered their release, there not being evidence to convict.

AGE OF RECRUITS—CASE OF JAMES MARTIN.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what is the legal age at which the military authorities can retain a recruit who, having enlisted, has claimed his discharge either by himself or his legal guardians on the grounds that he is under age; whether a boy named James Martin enlisted in the 1st Battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers last October, and whether his parents claimed his discharge on the grounds that he was under age, and enclosed the official certificate of his birth, showing his exact age was seventeen years and six months; and whether it is intended to discharge James Martin; and, if not, on what grounds is he retained.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: There is no legal age. The practice is to let a recruit go who is under seventeen years of age if his discharge is claimed. If he is over seventeen the discretion rests entirely with the general officer commanding the district. In this case he has decided to retain James Martin, and the man will accordingly be held to serve.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that Martin will be discharged?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I said just the reverse.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Suppose Martin is a ward in Chancery?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT—REPORTS AFTER 1897.

DR. TANNER (Cork County, Mid): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War why no Report for the Army Medical Department has been issued since the Report for the year 1897; what has been the cause of the delay; and when the next Report will be given in succession to Vol. xxxix.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The Report for 1898 will shortly be issued.

COAST DEFENCE GUNS.

MR. MCKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) (for Mr. C. E. SHAW, Stafford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether some of the most modern guns have been removed from their places in the coast defences and sent to South Africa; and if so, what steps have been taken to replace them with others equally or possibly more efficient.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: No modern guns have been removed from their places in defences and sent to South Africa.

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.

MR. HOWELL (Denbigh Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the business of J. Bennett and Sons, which has been recently struck off the list of contractors to the War Office on the ground of supplying defective stores for the use of Her Majesty's Field Force in South Africa, was some time ago purchased by Underwood and Sons, Limited, who have since carried on the business under the name and style of J. Bennett and Sons; whether the said Underwood and Sons, Limited, had before purchasing the business of Bennett and Sons been struck off the list of War Office contractors for malpractices in the execution of contracts; and whether he is aware that the said Underwood and Sons, Limited, although struck off the War Office list of contractors, have subsequently, under the name and style of Bennett and Sons, executed large contracts for the War Office, including that which has led to their being again struck off the War Office list as J. Bennett and Sons; whether he can state whether any and what person is responsible for ascertaining

the identity of contractors executing contracts for the War Office; and whether he can state whether any and what precautions are taken to prevent contractors guilty of malpractices continuing to contract with the War Office after being struck off the list under circumstances similar to the above.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Messrs. Underwood and Sons, who were struck off the list of contractors for supplying rotten hay to the forces, were the same firm which bought the name and business of Bennett, and again tendered and were again dismissed from the list of contractors for a similar offence shortly afterwards; and whether the Government proposes to prosecute this firm.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Bennett's, until they were recently struck off the list, had been regular contractors to the War Office since 1873. Underwood's was struck off the list in 1884. It would now appear from statements made by Brown—the other contractor recently removed from the list—that Underwood acquired Bennett's business, and has been dealing with the Department in the name of Bennett. The Financial Secretary, through his executive officers, is responsible for making all necessary inquiries as to the standing of contractors. The names of blacklisted contractors are widely circulated among all officers likely to be concerned; and every effort is made to detect any attempt on the part of such contractors to deal with the War Department under assumed names.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Does my hon. friend see any objection now to give the Returns in the form I asked for?—that is, to give the Christian names, the surnames, and addresses of all the members of every firm which were struck off the list.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Does my right hon. friend mean the names of all contractors that have ever been struck off the list?

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: In my motion for the Return I said, "During the current financial year," but I should like it for ten years.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Perhaps my right hon. friend will confer

with me in the matter. There is not the least disposition to screen or shelter anyone. The hesitation of the Secretary of State to disclose, at first, the two names of these contractors, whose names appear in the Returns given to the House, was solely due to the fact that litigation was pending between them which might have been prejudiced by his so doing.

MAJOR RASCH: In reply to the latter part of my question, will the hon. Gentleman say whether the Government will prosecute?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Upon that point I have to say that the Secretary of State is taking legal advice.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Is it the case that the War Office only recently took back a contractor who had been previously struck off?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Member must give notice of that question.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Then I give notice that I shall call attention to the matter on the Estimates.

IRISH FINANCIAL RELATIONS.— GOVERNMENT STORES—COMPARATIVE OUTLAY IN THE THREE KINGDOMS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he will sanction a Return showing the comparative outlay in England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively on foot of Government stores and supplies purchased since the beginning of the current financial year, April 1st, 1899, to the present time.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The preparation of such a Return would involve an immense amount of labour. I am not prepared to impose such a task upon the War Office at the present time.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask the First Lord if it would not be possible to give such a Return, considering the great importance of this matter in its bearing upon the controversy arising out of the Report of the Financial Relations Commission? It is of the utmost importance, in view of the debate that is coming on next week.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am quite ready to make inquiry into the matter, but I understand that every Irish contractor has as great facility for obtaining contracts as English and Scotch contractors. Consequently, I do not see that the Return would have the bearing of which the hon. Gentleman speaks upon the debate.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman facilitate the obtaining by us of information as to the comparative outlay upon alleged Imperial purposes in England, Scotland, and Ireland?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If that is the inquiry the hon. Gentleman desires, I shall be glad to try to give it, but I am afraid it will be very difficult to obtain the information.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman facilitate the obtaining of the Returns as soon as possible?

[No answer was given.]

WOOLWICH CADETS—GUNS FOR DRILL PURPOSES.

Mr. SOAMES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the cadets at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, who are being trained for the engineers and artillery, are taught gun drill with muzzle-loading guns of an obsolete pattern; and whether the Government will provide guns of a modern type for the instruction of the cadets at Woolwich.

*Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: They have breech-loading guns for drill purposes of the latest type.

RIFLE RANGES.

Mr. SOAMES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Government requirements for rifle ranges entail the provision of a piece of land 4,000 yards long by 500 yards wide; and, whether it is possible, by means of screens, to provide a perfectly safe range for the use of the Lee-Enfield rifle on a much smaller piece of land.

*Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The dimensions of a range depend entirely on the nature of the country, but on a level

site for a 1,000 yards range ground would be required in length 2,000 yards behind the butt, and in breadth 200 yards at the butt, and 500 yards at 1,000 yards in rear. Inquiries are at present being made in regard to the provision of safety ranges of smaller dimensions.

YEOMANRY—THE LONG SERVICE MEDAL.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the desirability of giving to the Yeomanry the long-service medal now given to the Volunteers has been considered; and, if so, what decision has been arrived at.

*Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: This suggestion has been repeatedly made, but it has not been thought desirable to adopt it.

VOLUNTEER OFFICERS' OUTFIT ALLOWANCE.

Mr. McKENNA (for Mr. C. E. SHAW): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any allowance for outfit will be provided out of the public funds for Volunteer officers proceeding with active service companies to South Africa, such outfit forming no part of their ordinary equipment and being of no further use to them after their return home on the conclusion of the war.

*Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: A capitation allowance of £12 is paid to the corps for the provision of the outfit of each officer and man of the Volunteers proceeding with the service companies to South Africa.

VOLUNTEER CAPITATION GRANT.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is intended to graduate the Volunteer capitation grant according to the area covered by the corps, inasmuch as a country corps may require as many as a dozen armouries and drill halls, whereas a city corps need only require one.

*Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I am afraid that the suggestion of my honourable and gallant friend would not prove practicable.

VOLUNTEERS—LOANS TO DETACHED COMPANIES—THE NEW VOLUNTEER REGULATIONS.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if assistance will be given to companies other than head-quarter companies to raise funds for the erection of drill halls. May I also ask when the new Volunteer regulations will be out?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I cannot answer the latter question without notice, but they will not be long, certainly. The same assistance in the nature of facilities for the grant of loans is given to detached companies as is given to head-quarter companies.

VOLUNTEERS FOR SHETLAND.

SIR LEONARD LYELL (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the War Office has received a memorial from Shetland asking for permission to establish a local Volunteer force, either of rifles or artillery; and whether the Government will be prepared to entertain favourably this request, considering that there is no Militia force raised in the county, and (except the Royal Naval Reserve, which is confined to fishermen) there is no opportunity offered for the people of the islands to qualify themselves to take a part in the defence of the country.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The memorial has been recently received, and will be duly considered. It will be difficult, however, to utilise their services in schemes for national defence.

THE WAR LOAN.

MR. BAIRD (Glasgow, Central): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether in allotting the War Loan he will give preference to applications made by British subjects.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I am afraid it would not be possible to adopt the suggestion of my hon. friend. No such preference was suggested in the terms of the issue, and I do not think it would be possible in practice.

SOUTH AFRICAN PAPERS.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs why, on Tuesday afternoon, only 200 copies of "Africa, No. 2, 1900," laid before Parliament on that day, were sent from the Foreign Office for the use of Members; and if he is aware that, after repeated inquiries for the said Papers at the Vote Office by Members, no further copies could be obtained.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The 200 copies of Parliamentary Paper "Africa No. 2 (1900)" which were sent to the Vote Office from the Foreign Office on Tuesday afternoon were sent in pursuance of a long-established practice, under which, in special cases, a limited number of advance copies of a Paper of exceptional interest is furnished at the earliest moment for the immediate use of such hon. Members as may wish to refer to it. The usual delivery of the Paper "Africa No. 2" took place on Wednesday morning, independently of the special advance delivery made on Tuesday afternoon.

ANTI-BRITISH DEMONSTRATIONS IN SAXONY.

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the fact that the British community in Dresden have been subjected to continual insults during the past three months; that the British flag was torn down from the Anglo-American Club in which it was displayed; and that the English church has been damaged and disfigured; and whether Her Majesty's Government have any information to this effect; and, if so, whether they propose to address a remonstrance to the Government of Saxony, with a view to prevent a recurrence of such proceedings.

*MR. BRODRICK: Her Majesty's Government are informed by Sir A. Condie Stephen that there have been occasional instances of insolent behaviour to British subjects in the streets of Dresden. The British flag which was left flying from a window of the Anglo-American Club at night was torn down, and the English Church was on two occasions disfigured at night. Sir A. Condie

Stephen has not failed to make strong representations to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who has expressed deep regret and has given satisfactory assurances that every possible measure will be taken by the police to prevent recurrence of such deplorable incidents and to protect British subjects. The individual suspected of tearing down the flag has been arrested. The flag has been recovered.

NAVAL DISCIPLINE—CHANNEL SQUADRON.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that the following notice was issued on the 22nd of February to the engine-room artificers serving with the Channel Squadron—namely, “Unless the E.R.A.’s who rode into Castleton, passing the rear-admiral and the captains of the “Hannibal” and “Resolution,” are reported, the leave of the E.R.A.’s ashore to-day will be stopped until further orders”; and whether this notice has since been withdrawn; and, if not, whether he will take steps to have it withdrawn in the interests of those chief petty officers who were in no way concerned with the offence.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): The Admiralty have no knowledge of the notice to the engine-room artificers of the Channel Squadron referred to in the question. In any case, the Admiral in command is responsible for the maintenance of discipline and order in the fleet under his orders, and it would be very undesirable for the Admiralty to interfere with the steps he has found it necessary to take to secure these.

MR. FENWICK: Will the hon. Gentleman cause inquiries to be made as to whether this notice was posted?

MR. MACARTNEY: I will consult my right hon. friend.

CHANNEL SQUADRON—RATIONS.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) (for Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL, Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that there is discontent among the crews of the Channel Fleet with respect to the quality and quantity of the food supplied to the

ships, and that complaints with reference to the quality and quantity of the food are discountenanced by the officers, and regarded as evidence of insubordination; and whether he will direct an investigation independently conducted to be made as to whether the rations served on board Her Majesty’s ships of the Channel Fleet are of the proper quality and quantity, and whether the Admiralty will direct the sale of provisions on board these ships to be discontinued, or provide that goods be sold at the canteens not at extortionate prices but at the prices at which similar goods are sold on shore.

MR. MACARTNEY: The reply to the first question is in the negative. With regard to the second question, I must refer the hon. Gentleman to the remarks made by the First Lord of the Admiralty in the course of the debate in this House on Thursday last.* The managing committee, which with two exceptions is composed of representatives of the men, should be competent to take precautions against extortionate prices being charged. As a matter of fact, it is understood that the goods sold in the canteens are retailed at a lower price than that at which they could be obtained by the men on shore.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Could not arrangements be made to supply the men in the Channel Fleet with home-fed meat?

MR. MACARTNEY: All the fresh meat supplied to the Channel Squadron is supplied at local ports by local merchants.

INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH COMPANY—RUSSIAN CONVENTION.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has any information to the effect that the Telegraphic Convention with Russia has been renewed by the Indo-European Company on the basis of a return of 17½ per cent. to that Government from the gross earnings of the company; and whether this arrangement has been concluded with the knowledge of and after consultation with the Indian Government, as one of the joint purse partners.

* See page 413 of this volume.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have no information as to the renewal of the agreement between the Indo-European Telegraph Company and the Russian Government, nor has the Government of India, so far as I am aware, been consulted on the subject.

**INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS—
CASE OF KANTY CHANDRA MOOKERJEE.**

SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will lay upon the Table the memorial of Kanty Chandra Mookerjee, addressed to him under date of 22nd December, 187—, together with the Papers therein referred to.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have received no memorial from the person named in the hon. Member's question bearing the date mentioned in the Paper. A memorial dated the 22nd December, 1897, has, however, been received, in which the memorialist appealed against orders passed in 1889, dismissing him from Government service and refusing him a pension. I saw no reason to interfere. The Papers do not appear to be of sufficient importance to be presented to Parliament.

INDIAN FAMINE RELIEF WORKS.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will specify the various forms of employment provided at the famine relief works; and, whether he can state approximately the number of persons employed on breaking metal for roads, on excavating tanks, and on constructing embankments for railways.

LORD G. HAMILTON: The hon. Member has mentioned, in the latter part of his question, the principal forms of employment provided for those who need relief in the famine districts; namely, the construction of roads, of irrigation works, and of railways. Under each of these heads many different kinds of labour are comprised, and the object of the authorities is, as far as possible, to adapt the work to the habits and capacities of the workers; but I cannot give a complete statement either as to the nature of these various employments, or as to the number of persons employed upon each of them.

**TRUST FUND INVESTMENTS IN
COLONIAL SECURITIES.**

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the prohibition of the investment of trust funds in Colonial Government securities is still in operation; and, if so, whether there is any early prospect of the removal of this restriction.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is not correct to say that there is a prohibition of the investment of trust funds in colonial securities, but they can only be so invested if the terms of the trust deed permit it. The matter is under consideration, and I hope later to be in a position to make a statement on the subject.

**GIBRALTAR—POLICE, MUNICIPAL,
AND SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.**

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the attention of the Governor of Gibraltar has been called to the question of introducing reforms into the administration of the police, municipal, and sanitary departments at Gibraltar; and what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take for the purpose of remedying the grievances of which residents in the town and fortress complain.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The only reform required in regard to the police in Gibraltar is the building of police barracks. The question is engaging the attention of the Governor, but a suitable site is difficult to obtain. The Sanitary Commissioners who are the only municipal authority in the town perform their duties satisfactorily. I am not aware of any grievances of which the residents complain.

**MALTA—SANITARY CONDITION OF
BARRACKS.**

MR. STEVENSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can now state the decision of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the advisability of holding a departmental or inter-departmental inquiry into the sanitary condition of the barracks, hospitals, and burial grounds at Malta, with the object of improving the buildings occupied by the Army and by Naval officers and others in that island.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The consideration of this subject has not yet been concluded, but as at present advised Her Majesty's Government do not perceive that any departmental inquiry will be required.

NIGERIA—ATTACK OF NATIVE TRIBESMEN ON BRITISH OFFICIALS.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received any information as to the reported fighting in Nigeria between 500 men of the second battalion of the West African Frontier Force and a body of Mitchi tribesmen, east of Lokoja; and whether he can state what were the casualties of the British troops, and what was the object of the expedition.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes; General Lugard has reported that in January the Mitchis made an attack on a party engaged in constructing a telegraph line from Lokoja to Ibbi, killing one native soldier and wounding Captain Eaton and ten native soldiers. Shortly afterwards a further attack was made, in which two native soldiers were killed and three dangerously wounded. Lieutenant-Colonel Lowry-Cole has been sent with reinforcements to restore order, but no further information has at present been received except that Sergeant Hawkins has been wounded.

NEWFOUNDLAND TREATY SHORE.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the Report compiled by the two Royal Commissioners, Sir James Erskine and Sir John Bramston, dealing with the French treaty shore question in Newfoundland, will be printed and issued to Members.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have already stated in reply to similar questions* that it is not intended to publish the Report at present.

DR. TANNER: Will there be any means by which Members of this House can obtain cognisance of this Report, or is it to remain hidden?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxvii., page 443.

MANCHESTER POSTAL EMPLOYEES' GRIEVANCES.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, pending the general decision promised as to the memorial presented to the Postmaster General by various employees of the Manchester Post Office with reference to the stripes of men who were juniors and have claimed full service and corresponding stripes still undistributed, he will consent to issue the stripes claimed in accordance with the Tweedmouth Committee Report (*i.e.*, junior service counted as half time), in the following cases: A. Hill, who has ten years and three months full appointment, and three years and four months junior, including unestablished, or two years and ten months appointed junior service, possessing now only one stripe, which he received in January, 1892, his appointed junior service having been counted as full time; and in the case of A. Gerard, who has fifteen years and three months full appointment, and three years and three months junior, including four months unestablished, possessing now two stripes, the last of which he received eight years ago, his junior service being then counted as full time.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The Tweedmouth Committee decided that service as junior postman can only be reckoned as half time towards good conduct stripes, and it has been decided by the Postmaster General that the case of the postmen at Manchester shall be dealt with accordingly.

IMPROVEMENTS IN CEREALS.

MR. MCKENNA (for Mr. C. E. SHAW): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the Brothers Gorton, of Newton-le-Willows, after having refused a large monetary offer from the American Government for the results of their discoveries in respect to the successful crossing of cereals and grasses, have offered the whole of their experiments gratuitously to three successive Ministers of Agriculture for the benefit of the British farmer; and whether the reply of each Minister in question has been that there is no provision at the Board of Agriculture for the supervision of such experiments.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): Correspondence has taken place between Messrs. R. and J. Garton, of Newton-le-Willows, and successive Presidents of the Board of Agriculture, with regard to the work they have done in connection with the production of improved varieties of wheat, barley, oats, and rye, but the purport neither of the letters received nor of the answers sent appears to me to be correctly indicated in the question. I shall be happy to supply a copy of the correspondence to the hon. Member if he so desires.

SHEEP WORRYING.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is in a position to state what measures the Government will take to put down the serious evil of sheep worrying.

*MR. LONG: We propose to include, in the Bill which I am about to introduce, certain provisions with regard to the seizure of stray dogs and the prevention of straying, which will, I hope, enable local authorities to check the worrying of sheep, with regard to which, as I am well aware, considerable complaint has arisen in many parts of Scotland. The proposals we make with regard to the issue of certificates of exemption from license duty will also, I trust, be of some value in this connection.

LEAD POISONING.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the following cases have been reported to the Home Office as cases of lead poisoning:—John James Brooks, glost placer, at Johnston's, Hanley; Edward Gibson, dipper, at Johnson's, Burslem; Thomas Walker, ground layer, at Grimwade's; Ellen Harrup, litho duster, at Booth's; Harriett Hall, litho transfer duster, at Chromo Transfer Company's; and, if not, why they were not so reported.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The case of Gibson has been duly notified as one of lead poisoning. The cases of Brooks, Harrup, and Hall have not

been notified, and they are not believed by their medical attendants to be cases of lead poisoning, and I may say that two of these persons (being women) were, on examination by the certifying surgeon, suspended from employment in August last. The reasons for suspension may be various; but if the surgeon had believed them to be lead poisoning, it would have been his duty also to report them. The remaining case of Walker is one of paralysis of the wrist developed three years ago, when the man consulted the late Dr. Arlidge. I cannot say why Dr. Arlidge did not notify the case, I am informed that the man has not since that date consulted a medical man.

RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH — DISTURBANCES DIRECTED AGAINST OPPONENTS OF THE WAR AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON, Highbury (LONDON), AND SCARBOROUGH, AND IN SCOTLAND.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the recent riots in Stratford-on-Avon, and to the statement of Mr. H. H. Bullard that his house was invaded by a mob, who broke the windows and damaged or completely destroyed his whole stock of old china and antique furniture; and what steps are being taken by the Government to protect peaceable citizens from such proceedings.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: Yes, Sir, I have made inquiries, but as proceedings are being taken against two of the ringleaders, and as I am informed that Mr. Bullard is about to make a claim under the Riot (Damages) Act, 1886, it would not be proper for me to say more at present except that I hope the local authorities, on whom the responsibility lies, will everywhere exercise firmness in preventing such riotous proceedings.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will be good enough to say a word in answer to the concluding part of my question, with regard to the steps to be taken to prevent a recurrence of these disorders.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I thought my answer implied that I thought the Government could not do anything more at present. Proceedings are, as I explained, being taken against two of the ringleaders, and a claim for damages will

be made. Under those circumstances it would be highly improper for me to say anything as to the circumstances attending these proceedings.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that under similar circumstances in Ireland trial by jury would have been suspended under the Coercion Act?

[No answer was given.]

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a meeting near Highbury Corner, which was being conducted in a perfectly quiet manner, last Sunday, until broken up by the police on the ground that it was likely to become disorderly; whether this is a sufficient pretext for interfering with a peacefully conducted meeting; and whether he can promise that such gatherings shall be protected in future.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I have made enquiry into this matter. The police did not interfere until the meeting had in their judgment become disorderly and there was serious danger of a breach of the peace. I am of opinion that the police were entirely justified in the action they took.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether his attention has been called to the damage to property in Scarborough during recent riots, belonging to Mr. Woodhead, a late Member of this House, and other persons; and whether he can say from what source, if any, compensation can be claimed by those persons out of public funds.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I have not seen any particulars of the incident to which the hon. Member refers, and it is, therefore, not possible for me to express any opinion as to whether any proceedings for compensation would be successful.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the numerous recent instances of disturbance connected with meetings called for the discussion of South African affairs, or directed against the person and property of individuals owing to their supposed

opinions about the present war, Her Majesty's Government will cause inquiry to be made how far and by whom these disturbances were organised; and will be consider what steps are necessary to prevent a repetition of such occurrences, and to punish the offenders.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Every case reported to my right hon. friend the Home Secretary has been carefully examined, and every such unhappy occurrence will be so examined. There is not the slightest evidence that there has been any organisation of these demonstrations, which appear to be absolutely spontaneous in their character as far as the evidence which has come before my right hon. friend goes to show. As the right hon. Gentleman is aware, it is the local authorities who are responsible both for the maintenance of order and for the punishment of transgressors, and any aid which can be given to them in carrying out those duties shall, of course, be readily afforded. Speaking for myself, I strongly deprecate these demonstrations, and I expect no good of them. I think that they are contrary to the best traditions of English life. For a large part of my political life I have belonged to a party which was unable to hold meetings in certain portions of the country, and, therefore, I am at least as anxious on this subject as the right hon. Gentleman, who has been more fortunately situated than I myself could possibly be. But I think that the responsibility rests not only upon the local authorities and upon those concerned in these unfortunate proceedings, but also upon those who called the meetings. It must be remembered that public feeling is necessarily deeply stirred at the present time. In every district of the country there are persons who have lost near relatives or friends in the present war; and nine-tenths of the country—ninety-nine hundredths of the country—believe, rightly or wrongly, that these meetings are called for an object which, if it were effectual, would render the occurrence of these great calamities possible. They think that in no other country in the world, and least of all in the Transvaal itself, would such meetings be tolerated; and they are aware that the fact of such meetings being held is, by people who know little of our methods and traditions, used abroad as an indication of a divided country and a hesitating Government. In

these circumstances, the tension of public opinion must necessarily be of a kind affording a grave anxiety to those responsible for the public peace; and I venture to add that those who call these meetings ought to be careful lest they ask more of human nature than all history shows that human nature is capable of giving.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have only two questions to ask the right hon. Gentleman in reference to the somewhat long explanation which he has made. The first is this. I wish to know whether he is aware of what I believe to be the case, as far as I have been able to look into the matter, that a large number of the meetings which were the occasion of these disturbances were private meetings, and not public meetings at all. In the second place, I wish, for the sake of curiosity, passing by the general political effect of what he has said, to ask the right hon. Gentleman on what occasions and where the party to which he belongs has been prevented from obtaining a hearing— [Cries of "Aston Riots!" and "Birmingham!"]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As to the information which the right hon. Gentleman desires, in regard to the nature of the meetings, I am afraid that I must ask him to put the question to my right hon. friend the Home Secretary, who has the details, or to give me notice of the question, when I shall be glad to answer it at a future day. As to the second supplementary question of the right hon. Gentleman, I listened to it with some surprise; for I remember that during the crisis of the Home Rule discussion it was impossible, even in most parts of the metropolis, for the Unionist party to hold a meeting.

MR. COURTNEY: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman this simple supplementary question. He spoke of having consulted with the Home Secretary. Will he take care that inquiry shall be pursued further, and shall apply to the incidents which have occurred in Scotland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consult my right hon. friend the Lord Advocate on the subject.

THE DATE OF EASTER.

MR. RICHARDSON (Durham, S.E.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General

whether he is aware that under Section 3 and relative schedule of 24 George II., c. 23,* Easter Day is the first Sunday after the full moon which happens upon or next after the 21st day of March, and if the full moon happens upon a Sunday, Easter Day is the Sunday after; and that the first full moon which happens next after the 21st day of March this year is on Sunday the 15th April at 1.2 a.m., and that Easter Day should therefore apparently fall on the 22nd April, and not on the 15th April as given in the calendar; and whether having regard to the possibility of doubt arising as to when bills falling due on a day dependent on the date of Easter are legally payable, he will introduce a short Bill to make the 15th April Easter Day this year in Law as well as in the calendar.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The third section of the statute referred to by the hon. Member enacts that Easter shall be observed according to these tables and rules annexed to the statute. One of the tables provides that the paschal full moon in the year 1900 falls on April 14, and that the feast of Easter falls on the 15th. The fact is that the full moon referred to in the statute is not the actual full moon nor the mean full moon, but a fictitious or statutory full moon, sometimes called the ecclesiastical full moon. As there is no possibility of doubt upon the question it is not proposed to introduce any legislation respecting it. It may interest the House to know that attention was called to a similar occurrence in the years 1818 and 1845, and some learned papers were written upon the subject, to which I shall be glad to refer the hon. Member. Perhaps I may be allowed to point out that some arrangement of the kind was necessary, as otherwise Easter might fall on different days.

* Reference may be made to *The Parliamentary History*, Vol. xiv., p. 979, for an account of "Proceedings in the Lords on the Bill for regulating the Commencement of the Year, and for Correcting the Calendar now in use" (1751). The speech of the Earl of Chesterfield in introducing this measure is, unfortunately, not preserved, but an account of it will be found in No. 215 of the Chesterfield "Letters." The speech of the Earl of Macclesfield (reproduced in the *History*), in seconding the motion for Second Reading, abounds in astronomical lore and historical detail, and gives a complete account of the methods adopted for the finding of the date of Easter, commencing—naturally—with the rule laid down by the Council of Nice in 325.

in different parts of the United Kingdom, which would not promote unity ; and, as a learned writer, speaking of the subject, said, " The Church cares more for peace and concord than for the equinox or the moon."

SCOTTISH SECONDARY EDUCATION GRANT.

*SIR W. WEDDERBURN : I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists in those parts of Scotland which were excluded from a share of the Secondary Education grant under the Minute of 27th April last ; whether he will specify the districts thus excluded and state whether the Act of 1898, which applies to the whole of Scotland, justifies such exclusion ; whether he is aware that in Banffshire excellent secondary education is provided in the secondary departments of State-aided schools, and that there is no immediate prospect of higher class secondary or technical schools, which are alone entitled to the grant, being established in the county ; whether the Secretary for Scotland has considered a letter of 1st December last from the County Committee on Secondary Education, pointing out that the effect of the Minute will be to draw away the best pupils to a distance and cause deterioration of the elementary schools, with a tendency to rural depopulation ; and whether he will reconsider the Minute with reference to the facts and arguments set forth in that letter.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire) : The conditions under which the grant in question is distributed apply equally to all parts of Scotland, and no district is at any disadvantage except in so far as it fails to fulfil these conditions. The arguments which are outlined in the terms of the hon. Member's question were set forth in detail by the Banffshire County Committee, and were fully considered by the Secretary for Scotland and dealt with by him in correspondence. The letter of 1st December has also been considered, but it does not add anything to the case, as previously stated. There is no intention of altering the policy laid down by the Minute of 27th April.

LIMERICK AND CORK POSTMEN— RATE OF PAY.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as

representing the Postmaster General, whether, although the scales of pay at the Limerick and Cork Post Offices were the same until 1898, Cork men are now on a higher pay scale than Limerick ; and what are the grounds which justify this difference, against which the Limerick postmen have unsuccessfully petitioned the Department.

MR. HANBURY : As stated in reply to a similar question asked by the hon. Member on the 1st August last, the general higher rate of wages at Cork and the greater size and importance of the town as compared with Limerick are considered to justify the payment of the Cork postmen on a higher scale.

THE MAAMTRASNA MURDERERS (1882).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN : I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether there are any of the Maamtrasna prisoners still in custody ; if so, how many ; where are they confined ; what is the condition of their health ; and whether it is intended to reconsider their sentences.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) : Three of the prisoners referred to in this question, who were sentenced to death and had their sentences commuted, are still in custody. Two of them, namely Martin and Thomas Joyce, are confined in Maryborough Prison, and the third, Patrick Joyce, is in Mountjoy Prison. The Medical Member of the Prisons Board reports that Martin Joyce is in possession of good health and strength, that Thomas Joyce is in good health, and that the health of Patrick Joyce is fairly good. The cases of these convicts were under the consideration of the Lord Lieutenant so recently as October last, and will again come up for consideration in the ordinary way at the usual intervals, or sooner on memorial, if special circumstances require.

BALLIVOR NATIONAL SCHOOL— ASSAULT OF A PUPIL BY MASTER.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN : I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that the master of Ballivor National School, Mr. Fox, has been convicted before County Court Judge Curran and fined £40 for assaulting a boy pupil, and that this is the second convic-

tion against this teacher for assaulting a pupil; and whether he is still in charge of Ballivor School, or engaged in any capacity on it, and whether the Commissioners of National Education intend to take any and what action in the matter.

MR. ATKINSON: The case of the teacher referred to has been before the Commissioners, who have directed that the payment of his salary shall cease as from the end of the present month.

BALLIVOR DISPENSARY DOCTOR'S FEES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that in the case of the dispensary doctor of Ballivor full fees were paid by the litigant in whose interest he attended court, and the union was charged with the payment of his substitute; and, if so, what action he proposes to take to relieve the rates of Trim Union of such payments.

MR. ATKINSON: I have no information as to whether the doctor was paid his fees or not. I have already, in reply to a question of the hon. Member, informed him that the Local Government Board have been advised that a doctor who is compelled under subpoena to attend a court of justice is temporarily incapacitated from performing his duties within the meaning of the Relief Act, and that the Board of Guardians were bound, therefore, to make provision for the care of the sick poor during his absence by employing and paying a temporary substitute. I also stated that the doctor, if obliged to pay his substitute out of the expenses he receives as a witness, must be out of pocket by reason of his obedience to the subpoena. My answer on this latter point is not correctly reported in the Parliamentary Debates of the 1st instant.

LAND SUB-COMMISSIONERS—SITTINGS IN COUNTY LEITRIM.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (for Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL): On behalf of my hon. friend, I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that notice was served on upwards of fifty applicants for the fixing of fair rents of their holdings situate in the districts of Glencolombkilm and Kilcar that their applica-

tions would be heard by a sub-commission sitting at Killybegs, a distance of upwards of thirty miles from some of their holdings; whether he is aware that the hearing of these cases has been adjourned till after Easter; and whether steps will be taken to secure the hearing of these cases in Carrick, which can be reached by the tenants with less inconvenience, and is nearer their holdings.

MR. ATKINSON: With regard to the first paragraph, I would refer to my reply to the similar question addressed to me by the hon. Member on the 2nd instant. At the sitting of the Sub-Commissioners at Killybegs on the 1st instant application was made for the adjournment of a number of cases, and in granting the adjournment it was arranged that the cases should be heard at Carrick on a date to be fixed hereafter.

IRISH PUBLIC WORKS ASSISTANT SURVEYORS.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of assistant surveyors employed by the Board of Public Works in Ireland; whether their duties comprise the preparation of plans and specifications for new buildings and improvements, the inspection of national schools and parochial houses, post offices, and police barracks, and frequently situated in three and four counties; and what are the salaries of these officials.

MR. HANBURY: The number of assistant surveyors is eleven—namely, five first class and six second class. The statement in the second paragraph is substantially accurate, but the assistant surveyors do not prepare the plans and specifications for important new buildings and improvements, such as new post offices. This is done by the three principal surveyors, who also check and, if necessary, revise the plans and specifications prepared by the assistant surveyors for minor new works and maintenance. The salaries of the assistant surveyors are:—First class, £310—15—400 per annum; second class, £200—10—300 per annum.

IRISH COUNTY SURVEYORS' SALARIES.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief

Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state in what counties of Ireland have the salaries of county surveyors been increased by the Local Government Board beyond the amounts decided upon as sufficient by the county councils; and upon what grounds have the views of the local bodies conversant with the duties to be performed by these officials been ignored and set aside in some cases.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): In fourteen counties the surveyors have appealed to the Local Government Board against the salaries proposed to be given to them by the councils, and in these cases the Board have increased the salaries. The counties are Carlow, Galway West Riding, Queen's, Tipperary South Riding, Waterford, Westmeath, Antrim, Cork West Riding, Kerry, Kilkenny, Leitrim, Mayo North and South Riding, and Wexford. In the eight last-mentioned counties the councils proposed to allow the surveyors no increase of salary, notwithstanding their admittedly increased duties, thus entirely ignoring the provisions of Section 115 (18) of the Act. In several counties the salary of the surveyor is still under consideration. As regards the second paragraph, I must refer to my reply to the question of the hon. Member for West Kerry on the 9th inst.*

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Can the right hon. Gentleman point out what are the increased duties which necessitate the increase in salaries?

MR. ATKINSON: I cannot state them in detail at the moment.

MR. FLAVIN: Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman cannot argue the matter.

ULSTER AGRICULTURAL AND DAIRY SCHOOL AND HENRY TRUST.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland whether he has seen the scheme for the administration and management of the Ulster Agricultural and Dairy School and Henry Trust, as approved by the Lord Chancellor of Ireland on 22nd June, 1899.

* See page 492 of this volume.

Whether its objects are to maintain or assist in maintaining an agricultural and dairy school and farm for the sons and daughters of farmers, and other persons born in the province of Ulster, for instructing them in the science and practice of agriculture, dairy farming, and all other subjects akin to these. Whether there is, from property accumulated for a number of years, a sum of above £12,000 now available to assist in starting the farm and school on fifty acres of land, near Downpatrick, which have been acquired for the purpose; and, whether, as £10,000 have been allocated by the Government to aid the Munster Agricultural School, the Irish Department of Agriculture will contribute a like sum for the Ulster Agricultural and Dairy School, in order that it may be started at once and suitable buildings erected under the auspices and subject to the approval of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (MR. PLUNKETT, Dublin Co., S.): The answers to the first three paragraphs in the question are in the affirmative. I cannot give the specific undertaking asked for in the fourth paragraph, but when the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Act comes into operation the Department will, in conference with the trustees, consider the advisability of supplementing the funds of the Henry trust, and carrying out the instructions of the founder. Under the scheme approved last year by the Lord Chancellor for Ireland, preference has to be given to a particular parish in the selection of pupils for agricultural instruction. This provision could hardly apply to public funds. The Attorney General has consented to bring the scheme again before the Lord Chancellor with a view to see whether it can be modified so as to meet this objection.

STREET PREACHING IN CORK.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that street preachers are at present creating disturbances in Cork; and whether steps will be taken to put a stop to this practice.

MR. ATKINSON: I am informed that on Sunday last an attack was made by a large crowd on the preachers who were conducting open-air services in the streets of Cork. Owing, however, to the prompt intervention of the police, no serious injury, I am happy to say, was sustained by any of the party, although two of them were unfortunately knocked down in the struggle that took place. With regard to the second paragraph, the hon. Member must be aware that the legality of street preaching has frequently been discussed in this House. The practice, unless it amounts to an obstruction of the public streets, is no offence by common or statute law, and the police have no power to put a stop to it, as suggested.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there are plenty of places of worship for all creeds in Cork?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MURDER OF MR. BIRD AT BANTRY— EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS FROM THE JUSTICES' EXAMINATION.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can say on what grounds the press were excluded from the recent investigation relative to the Bantry murder case; and whether instructions will be given that representatives of the press shall be admitted to any further proceedings.

MR. ATKINSON: The Justices in the exercise of their powers expressly conferred upon them by the 9th Section of the Petty Sessions Act excluded the press because they considered, rightly in my opinion, that it was more conducive to the administration of justice at the present stage of the case so to do than to admit the press. The reply to the second paragraph is in the negative. There is no power to give such instructions.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May I ask whether such matters are always left to the discretion of the local magistrates?

MR. ATKINSON: Yes, it is entirely within the discretion of the bench whether they shall exclude the press.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that, hitherto, in cases of this kind—?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Notice should be given.

IRISH PRISONS—LIBRARY REGULATIONS.

DR. TANNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as Chairman of the Irish Prisons Board, in how many gaols in Ireland are prisoners allowed one book per month for secular reading; whether the single volume is only given to prisoners who are confined for terms over two months, and then only permitted at end of first month; whether such books can only be obtained from the prison library; and if the number of such books available for prisoners is regulated by any standard or fixed principle, or if it is meagre in county prisons as a rule.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): My right hon. friend the Chief Secretary is not Chairman of the Irish Prisons Board, as stated by the hon. Member. In all local and minor prisons in Ireland every industrious and well-conducted prisoner who can read receives one secular book at a time. The book is not given for a month, but is changed at the discretion of the Governor. As regards the second paragraph, every prisoner receives a secular book on admission into prison. In the case of ordinary prisoners the books can only be obtained from the prison library, but first-class misdemeanants and prisoners awaiting trial are permitted, at their own expense and subject to the approval of the Visiting Committee, to obtain books in addition to those supplied by the prison. The supply of books in Irish local prisons is not a meagre one. A grant is annually made for the purchase of books, and the supply is constantly increasing.

DR. TANNER: Am I to understand that prisoners are allowed a secular book to read during the first month, and that if a prisoner finishes the book in the course of the second month he will be allowed another?

MR. ATKINSON: The book is changed, as I have stated, at the discretion of the Governor.

IRISH MEDICAL AND SANITARY OFFICERS.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if it is competent for medical officers of health and sanitary officers under the poor law guardians who are in receipt of emoluments from the ratepayers to hold in the same district the honorary and responsible position of aldermen and county councillors, under whose control arises matters affecting other officers of the poor law guardians.

MR. ATKINSON: As a general rule a man cannot be the paid officer or servant of or contractor to a county or district council, or municipal body, of which he is himself a member. If the hon. Gentleman desires a more definite opinion I must ask him to refer to a concrete case.

VISIT OF THE QUEEN TO IRELAND—SUGGESTED VISIT TO BELFAST.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether influential representations have been made from Belfast to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as to the satisfaction with which the inhabitants of that city would receive a visit from Her Majesty during the Queen's stay in Ireland; and whether the matter will be dutifully laid before Her Majesty, with a view to ascertain the Queen's pleasure concerning the desired visit to the capital of Ulster.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Her Majesty's Ministers are offering no advice to Her Majesty in regard to her movements during her approaching visit to Ireland, which, as my hon. friend knows, is of a private character.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARMY ESTIMATES.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state on what date, and at what hour, it is proposed to take the Report on Army Estimates, Vote 1, which has not been discussed.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman proposes to-night to make further progress with Vote 2 of the Army Estimates?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As the hon. Gentleman is aware, that cannot be taken after twelve. If my memory serves me, Report of Supply stands before the Vote to which he refers, but I hope the Report may be reached in reasonable time.

RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH — DISTURBANCES DIRECTED AGAINST OPPONENTS OF THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

[MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.]

SIR R. T. REID (Dumfries District) rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, "the recent serious disturbances in many parts of the country," but the pleasure of the House not having been signified,

*MR. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen, he called upon—

SIR R. T. REID: I, in common with a great number of gentlemen in this House, regret very much the necessity which has arisen for moving the adjournment of the House in reference to this matter. I expected that when my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition put his question in regard to these serious disturbances the answer of the Leader of the House would have shown not only an entire disapproval of these disgraceful scenes on the part of the Executive Government of the day, but also a determination on their part to guard the right of free speech, to which we have all been accustomed for so long, and which, I think, none of us are disposed to part with without a very strong protest. But, unfortunately the tone and substance of the answer of the First Lord of the Treasury was really more in the nature of a lecture to people who had not asked his advice than an indication that he was prepared to do his duty in preserving the right of free speech.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): If language means anything, I said in the most explicit, categorical, and unmistakable way that everything that could be done would be done.

SIR R. T. REID: The right hon. Gentleman expressed himself in this way

—that he deprecated the disturbances. But it is his duty to have the offenders punished.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am really very sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but he is misquoting my views. I said, among other things, that I deprecated very strongly these proceedings, but I said in addition to that, that the duty, as the hon. Member well knows, of preventing the disturbance and punishing offenders rested with the local authorities, and all the assistance we could give them in carrying out that duty would be given to them.

SIR R. T. REID: It is not in the slightest degree my intention to misrepresent the right hon. Gentleman, but the House has heard the whole of his answer, and I am entitled to hold and to express the opinion that that answer was not such an answer as ought to have come from a Minister of the Crown under the grave circumstances in which the question was put. ["Oh, oh!"] I hope, however, that at all events right hon. and hon. Gentlemen will respect the right of free speech in this House. Even if they are not prepared to respect that right outside the House, we are determined to assert our rights here in the matter. I wish to advert to the nature of these meetings and the nature of the disturbances which have taken place. The right hon. Gentleman spoke, in the first place—or at least I understand him so—as if these meetings were public meetings, and, in the second place, as though the disturbances had been confined to places in which attempts had been made to hold meetings. Neither of those assumptions is accurate. Let me advert to some of these instances. There was a meeting broken up at Mile End, when an attack was made by some hundreds of persons; railings and staircases were broken, and several people cut and injured. There was another case at Thornbury, where a meeting was stopped by a mob of about 200 persons, who smashed the windows, and perpetrated various acts of violence. A local timber merchant sent a letter to the press giving his experience. He said that he was seized by about a dozen men, thrown violently to the ground, kicked and knocked insensible; that there was only one policeman on the spot; that he had about 1,400

yards to go through the main street to reach his residence, in traversing which distance he was knocked down twelve or thirteen times. There was another case at Exeter Hall, in which a meeting was convoked by tickets, the public not being invited. My right hon. friend beside me reminds me that the Government are expressly responsible for peace in the metropolis. In regard to that meeting, notice was given beforehand to the police and assistance was requested in anticipation of some disturbance. While a Member of this House was addressing that meeting there was a most violent attack by hundreds of persons, and a free fight took place, lasting about twenty minutes, in which blows were exchanged, and there was very serious danger to the women as well as to the men at that meeting. There were thousands of people congregated in the Strand, many of whom were riotous and disorderly, and I am not aware that any steps have been taken to bring before the magistrates the persons responsible for this disgraceful scene. There was another case in Edinburgh, an account of which was given in the *Scotsman* newspaper. A crowd of about 2,000 people contrived to force an entry into the Queen Street Hall, and I am sorry to say that amongst the crowd that took part in the attack were some of the Yeomanry Sharpshooters. Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner was present on that occasion—an Englishman from Cape Colony who married a German lady, and who came over to this country as a loyal British subject, with no desire except that of reasoning with the public in regard to the best methods of preserving the South African dominions to this country. He may be right or he may be wrong in his opinion; that has nothing whatever to do with the matter. He entertains honest opinions, which are shared by thousands of our fellow-countrymen in South Africa, and he is entitled to have—I will not say a hearing, because people are not bound to go and hear unless they think fit—but he is entitled to protection of life and limb while he is discharging the duty which is open to every citizen in a law-abiding country. This gentleman was roughly handled. He was chased to his hotel, where I am sorry to say the threats of force were so great that he was compelled to leave in order to prevent the hotel itself being attacked

and seriously damaged. There are a number of other places—

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): How many?

SIR R. T. REID: There are quite a number of them. The list I have here is by no means complete, but these are some of the places contained in it—Paddington, Sheffield, York, West Bromwich, Canterbury, Ramsgate, Exeter Hall, Midhurst, Gloucester, Weston-super-Mare, Highbury, Northampton, New Cross, Peterhead, Redruth, Leicester, Brierley Hill, Dundee, Glasgow, Gateshead, Derby, Norwich, and Reading. ["Scarborough."] There are other places to which I ought to refer, and one is the case of Scarborough. In Scarborough there was a reception—not a public meeting at all—in Messrs. Rowntree's café, a place known to everybody who has visited Scarborough. Every window in that café was smashed by an infuriated crowd, largely drunk, I believe, as most of these crowds are on these occasions. All the windows were smashed also at Messrs. Rowntree's grocery premises, and the riot continued until two o'clock in the morning, and damage was done, according to the *Westminster Gazette*, which was estimated to be considerably upwards of £1,000. At last the Riot Act was read at about two o'clock in the morning, and the military were called out. I have given so far the references to a number of other cases, but these are the cases in which meetings took place, most of them private meetings, where evidently, by some organised mob, a terror for life and limb was created, and apparently the police were unable to offer an adequate protection at the time. Let me turn to other cases in which there was no public meeting at all, and I will only give a couple of cases. There was the case of Midhurst. At that place there was no public meeting, and no such provocation as the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House suggests. There was a great deal of smashing of plate-glass windows, some women were injured, and there were placards published in the streets suggesting and inciting violence against persons who were called pro-Boers. [Ministerial cheers.] I do not know whether hon. Gentleman opposite think that is the way to discourage violence in the different parts of this country. As a

Sir R. T. Reid.

matter of fact, in most cases, the people who were attacked, whose windows were smashed, and whose wives and children were terrified, disclaimed entirely having any sympathy whatever with what are called pro-Boer views. They were persons who had been attacked sometimes in the newspaper press, and in other instances by the scurrilous falsehoods repeated about other men's opinions; but whatever their opinions may be, what possible right or justification is there for men or women in their own homes in this country being attacked by a riotous mob and being driven to fly for protection to other places outside the town? There was a disgraceful occurrence at Stratford-upon-Avon. There the rioting continued for two or three days. One night the wrecking was done upon a very considerable scale. Several houses had every particle of glass smashed, and in one house the furniture was largely destroyed. There were some gentlemen of the name of Bullard who were made particularly the object of these attacks. They had their house broken into, their windows smashed, and the inmates of the house were terrified. In this case there had been no meeting of any sort or kind, and Messrs. Bullard wrote a letter to the papers which will explain what their position was, and I will read that letter.

COLONEL MILWARD (Stratford-upon-Avon): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that Messrs. Bullard are commencing legal proceedings, and under those circumstances is it desirable to discuss this point?

SIR R. T. REID: I do not think that anything I shall say will interfere in the least with legal proceedings. I am speaking on this question not as a matter of civil right between Messrs. Bullard and those who injured their property, but as a matter of public decency and public order.

COLONEL MILWARD: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but he said that the house of Messrs. Bullard was broken into—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must not interrupt in order to argue the case with the hon. and learned Gentleman.

SIR R. T. REID: My information is derived partly from their own letter, and

I shall be glad if the House will allow me to read it. [The hon. and learned Member read the letter, in which Messrs. Bullard said they were accused of floating a Boer flag when there was an English victory, and of desiring that all the English in South Africa might be killed, but there was not a word of truth in the accusations. They added that they had only protested that the war was unnecessary, and might and ought to have been avoided, but the Imperialists of to-day did not allow anyone to have or to express an opinion against the war without being dubbed traitors to their country.] In that case there were two men sent to prison. I do not know myself how many persons have been punished in connection with the disorders generally, and it is impossible to learn this, because all those particulars are not published in the metropolitan press. But you may take your information from any newspaper you like, either Conservative or Liberal, in the places where these disgraceful scenes of disorder have occurred, and there is no law-abiding person who will doubt that some people ought to be punished. I believe very few indeed have been even summoned. There has been a good deal of drinking in connection with the business, and I think the keepers of public-houses who serve drink to an angry mob already too much excited with liquor ought to be brought to justice. I think those who have organised this disorder—for undoubtedly there are proofs of organisation in connection with many of them—ought to be brought to justice. Those newspapers—and there are not a few of them—which have incited the people to do these things ought not to be forgotten in meting out justice, and certainly those people—most of whom are absolutely unable to pay for the damage they have done—who have inflicted such serious damage to property and disgraced the streets of so many of our towns with scenes of this kind ought to be brought to justice without any delay whatever. I wish to make one final observation in connection with this matter. Whether hon. Gentlemen agree with these sentiments or not is a thing which ought not to be allowed to weigh for one single moment. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House referred to times when he said it was impossible for his party to obtain a hearing in some parts of the country. I am not going to enter

into a historical discussion with the right hon. Gentleman. All I can say is this, that at that time, as now, it was the duty of the Government of the day and of those local officials who were responsible to enforce the right of public meeting in favour of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends, and although the right hon. Gentleman's views may be for the moment the popular view, the time may come before very long when the right hon. Gentleman and his friends may again have to invoke the same rights we now claim on this side of the House. It is not for one party or one set of views that I claim protection, but it is for the preservation of that right of free speech for which this country has always been renowned. The scenes that have taken place and the disturbances which have occurred at public meetings and with private persons have been absolutely unprecedented in the recent history of this country. I think the right hon. Gentleman did not deal with this matter in answer to the question put to him in the spirit which we had a right to expect, and I hope that before this debate closes we shall have assurances from the Home Secretary that he will send a circular, in the first instance, to those responsible for public order throughout the country, pointing out the dangerous examples which these instances have afforded and the risk of their repetition; and in the second instance that we shall have the assurance of the Government that they will see that there shall be, I will not say punishment, because that is a matter for the judge or the magistrate, but that the persons who have been guilty of these excesses which have been described in all the towns where they have taken place shall be brought before the tribunals of the law, in order that the right of free speech, and not only that, but the right of peaceful and quiet residence in their own homes, may be assured to all law-abiding citizens in this country. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made and Question proposed,
 "That this House do now adjourn."—
 (Sir R. T. Reid.)

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
 THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M.
 WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool):
 I cannot help thinking that in what the

hon. and learned Gentleman has said he has somewhat exaggerated the case. I do not wish in the slightest degree to differ from him in the severe terms in which he has spoken of the riotous damage to property which in a few cases has taken place during the last few weeks. I certainly did not understand that the answer of my right hon. friend the Leader of the House to the question put by the Leader of the Opposition was in any sense different from that which I now desire to express, namely, that the Government are prepared to support the local authorities in doing their duty by putting down such breaches of the law. I am very much surprised at the warmth with which the hon. and learned Gentleman attacked the Government for having failed in their duty. Wherein have the Government failed in their duty? I regret as much as the hon. and learned Gentleman or any hon. Gentleman on that side of the House—and I am sure I am speaking for all on this side of the House—the rowdiness and ruffianism which have mixed with the enthusiasm which certain of our victories in the course of the war have brought about in some of our cities, and which have led to certain outrages which cannot be sufficiently deplored. But wherein have the Government failed in their duty? I know nothing of the cases of Mile End, Thornbury, and one or two other cases referred to by hon. and learned Gentlemen, but I know something of the cases of Scarborough and Stratford-on-Avon, in both of which there were disgraceful rioting and wanton destruction of property. But when the hon. and learned Gentleman says that there was some organisation which brought about this unhappy state of things, I can assure him he is absolutely and entirely mistaken. Neither was there incitement by some local newspaper, which the hon. and learned Gentleman thinks ought to be prosecuted by the Government, nor was there incitement by any political club or organisation, and there was no knowledge that such things were about to take place. If I had known that this matter was to have been discussed to-day, I would have brought down with me the report I received from the authorities at Scarborough. I do not know that the matter is yet at an end, and I shall therefore speak of it with some reticence, but the report I have had

shows that there was no anticipation whatever that there would be any disturbance on that particular evening. The public meeting which Mr. Schreiner was announced to address was called for the next day, but on the previous evening Mr. Rowntree, formerly a respected Member of the House, and several of his friends held a reception in a café in one of the main streets of the town. I do not know if it was generally known that Mr. Schreiner was in the town. There was a rumour that he was coming. These things flew about, someone asked for the protection of the police, and the presence of the police in unusual numbers about the café where Mr. Rowntree and his friends were very likely may have called some public attention to it. At any rate there was a large crowd, and totally against the efforts of the police to prevent it, some persons not yet identified, but who, I hope, may be identified, flung stones and did some serious damage. There is no dispute whatever about that. After that the authorities did the best they could. The mayor being apprehensive of further disturbance and riot sent for the Militia, who came later on in the evening, and received a most cordial welcome from the inhabitants. I fail to see what more the local authorities or the Government could have done. The hon. and learned Gentleman finds fault with me or with the Government for not having prevented the smashing of these windows. I do not see how we could have done that, but I regret the occurrence very much, and I shall support the local authorities, if it lies with me, in any prosecution that may be possible for causing the damage.

SIR R. T. REID: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to say—as I think I ought to say—that the motive power for this motion was that I and others sitting near me thought that the tone and style of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House—although I entirely acquit him of that intention after what he has said—was precisely of that character which is calculated not to stop, but to encourage—

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: May I ask you, Sir, on a point of order, whether the adjournment was moved on the tone and style of my answer?

Sir M. White Ridley.

*MR. SPEAKER: I did not understand the hon. and learned Gentleman to say that that was the subject. What he said was that it was the motive power which induced him to move the adjournment.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I will leave that question to be settled by other authorities, but it certainly appears to me that the hon. and learned Gentleman misunderstood the answer of my right hon. friend. But I am now dealing with facts, and I am endeavouring to show that the local authorities were not to blame, that certain rioters were to blame, and I hope their punishment may follow, and that Her Majesty's Government cannot be blamed. With regard to the Stratford-on-Avon case, the right hon. and learned Gentleman says there was no meeting. There was a procession through the streets to celebrate the relief of Lady-smith, and certain young fellows got very noisy and demonstrative, and a large crowd passing down one of the main streets of that very quiet place made an attack on the windows and property of Mr. Bullard, who, rightly or wrongly, was an unpopular person with certain of the demonstrators on that occasion. There was no warning to the local authorities that anything of the kind was going to happen. No one justifies the action of these people, and it is a monstrous thing that a man's property should be damaged in that way. But with reference to the letter from Mr. Bullard, which the right and learned Gentleman read, there is another view of the case, namely, that Mr. Bullard had been rather aggressive on the occasion, and that if he had not done certain things he would not have been attacked. I do not want to press that for a moment, but the right hon. and learned Gentleman having read the letter, I wish to say that in my opinion at any rate, having read both sides of the question, there is an answer to it. Some of the persons have been punished, and this very day some more of the ringleaders have been brought before the magistrates, and within a very short time Mr. Bullard is to prefer his claim for compensation under the Riot (Damages) Act, 1886. It is perfectly obvious that under such circumstances there is no room for the action of the Government, and I do not see what

more the Government could have done. I have expressed in answer to questions in this House, my sense of the necessity of impressing on local authorities the duty of seeing that the law is carried out, and that if there is rioting or damage to property, measures should if possible be taken to punish the rioters and to prevent the recurrence of the riots. Something has been said about the meeting at Exeter Hall at which the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth was present. It may be that the police were warned—I do not know whether they were or not—but I have not heard of any row or disturbance in the Strand. The hon. and learned Gentleman knows as well as I do that the police are not justified in being present in Exeter Hall to keep a meeting orderly. What they have to do if there is reason to believe that there is going to be a riotous disturbance either inside or outside the meeting is to be ready in sufficient force to stop tumultuous disturbance or injury to person or property. If I understood the complaint of the hon. Baronet the other night, it was that the police were a little late in arriving on the scene, whether because of the pressure of the crowd outside or not I do not myself know. The other cases are, I admit, serious cases. I have shown that they are being dealt with. The local authorities ought to be encouraged to do their duty to prevent such riots, and the destruction of property in the future, and in doing so they will receive the support of the Government. At the same time, I must say that when public feeling is so excited as it is at the present moment, and when it is obvious that meetings which at other times would be harmless are now likely to be provocative of disturbance, there ought to be some consideration for the maintenance of the public peace. I do not say it was used in these cases, but there have been occasions in which very strong language has been used in favour of those who are now our enemies. Whatever may be said about free speech, and no one favours it more strongly than I do, there are times when men's feelings are strongly excited, and when allowance ought to be made for it, and those who are calling these public meetings ought to feel that they have some responsibility cast upon them, and that they ought to be very careful not to endanger the public peace.

*MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): The speech we have listened to to-night on this great question of public liberty has caused the greatest dismay in the minds of all constitutional persons in this House. The Home Secretary's unfortunate remark in regard to the disturbance at Stratford-on-Avon would seem to imply that if a man is unpopular in a district or amongst his neighbours from any cause whatsoever, an attack upon his person and his property is the less censurable on the part of the mob.

*Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY: What?

*MR. BROADHURST: Well; that it goes in extenuation of the illegal act.

*Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY: I entirely repudiate that; I most warmly repudiate it. I said that certain young men, enthusiastic over British victories, were marching down the streets and most unjustifiably took advantage of the unpopularity of a certain gentleman and broke his windows. I do not justify it.

*MR. BROADHURST: The unfortunate attempt at correction by the right hon. Gentleman has only made matters worse. What the Home Secretary did say was this— [HON. MEMBERS: Order, order!] Let us have free speech here. The Home Secretary, with that mildness of manner for which he is renowned, said that certain young men were in an excited condition, and that they were marching about the streets, collecting larger numbers to the crowd, and that they unjustifiably attacked this house and this person; but he added, "You must remember this man was unpopular." [HON. MEMBERS: No, no!]

*Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY: I said that this man was unpopular and held unpopular views, but I did not endeavour to argue that that justified what they did. I said that when the crowd were passing down the street, a flag was displayed, or something of that kind, and that they, or some of them, took part in an action which I deplore as much as the hon. Gentleman.

*MR. BROADHURST: I think I am within the knowledge of the House, but I will not contest the Home Secretary's explanation. I had no intention to inter-

rupt or to prevent his wish to moderate the effect of the language employed by him in that unfortunate speech which he has just made. But if the unpopularity of any citizen is to be any excuse for an attack upon his property there is an end to public rights and public liberties. I remember when the Colonial Secretary was the most unpopular man in England in Conservative quarters; but would that have been any justification, or mitigation, or any excuse or explanation for an attack upon his property as well as upon his person? Why, the ruling is monstrous; and I never before heard such revolutionary views expressed in this House as have been expressed by the Home Secretary, and indicated—[HON. MEMBERS: "Agreed, agreed!" and "Order, order!"]—and also substantiated by the Leader of the House. The first duty of a Government in any civilised country is to protect its citizens in the exercise of all legal rights, and the moment the Government fails to discharge that duty it fails to be entitled to the confidence and respect of its citizens. Now, the Home Secretary, of course, cannot be expected to know intuitively what is likely to happen on any given night, in any given place, and at any given hour of the night. But the Home Secretary knows perfectly well that for six months peaceable citizens have run great risks, and have on many occasions met with very rough and illegal treatment at the hands of riotous assemblies of people, and the right hon. Gentleman ought to have learned some elementary lessons in offering protection to his fellow-countrymen during the course of these six months. I know what would have happened, and so does the Home Secretary know, if there had been a strike near the docks, or in the cotton district. [An HON. MEMBER: Or in Ireland.] I leave it to my hon. friends from Ireland to deal with their own country; but I know what would have happened had it been a body of trades unionists on strike. The right hon. Gentleman would not have waited for a second attack. If there had been an attack in one village he would not have waited till the next night for fear that there would have been an attack in another village. He would have had the troops down there, and these troops would not have been received with the enthusiastic greetings of welcome that the Home Secretary describes

the troops had been received with by the riotous persons assembled round the café at Scarborough. There would have been all the military force, even amounting to 1,000 soldiers, rightly and justly employed by the Government, to hold back the people illegally assembled and illegally acting contrary to the rights of the citizens and breaking the law. Why has there been no arrest here? If it had been 500 cotton spinners or miners congregated together they would have been arrested in batches, and some one would have been brought to law and made to answer for his riotous proceedings. The effect of this night's debate will be, I fear, if the country takes its lead from the two speeches made from the Treasury bench, that there is an apology for riotous action. I am not a pro-Boer. [Hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!] I am not a pro-Boer, but I am in favour of liberty of speech. I have been in public life for a great many years. I have taken part for more than forty years in proceedings at public meetings, and I dare anyone to say that I ever lifted my finger in the whole of my life to prevent the full and free discussion of any subject of public interest that might be occupying the public mind. What I and those who laboured with me have conceded to others we claim at the hands of the Government for ourselves. I do hope that some hon. Members of this House who can speak with great authority on constitutional rights will yet press home upon the Government the necessity of giving some semblance of their sense of the serious position into which this country has drifted, when public rights are denied, private property attacked, and citizens are unable to freely and legally entertain their friends on their own property without exposure to grave personal danger. I sincerely trust that a great lesson will be learned from these extraordinary disclosures, these extraordinary confessions on the part of the Government that have characterised the part they have taken in the debate this evening.

*COLONEL MILWARD: I apologise to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dumfries Burghs for interrupting him. All I wished was to call attention—I am not quite sure that he was in the House when it was stated—to the fact that legal proceedings were commencing in regard to the case of

Messrs. Bullard. The right hon. Gentleman read an *ex parte* statement, in which it was said that Messrs. Bullard's house was broken into. But there is another side to the case. I have seen in the papers, and I believe that evidence, at all events, has been tendered, that a great deal of the disturbance arose from the fact that as the mob approached Messrs. Bullard's shop young Mr. Bullard issued from the shop with a gun and struck a man across the head. I would like to say something about what the Home Secretary said in regard to the organisation of the disturbances. It has been stated that the disturbances were organised at Stratford-on-Avon by the Working Men's Conservative Club. I may say that strict inquiry has been made into the matter, and, so far as that club is concerned, the members are absolutely guiltless of any complicity in the matter, except, as has happened in London and elsewhere, that three or four young men, elated by the news of the victories in which we all rejoice so much, started, marching down the street, singing popular songs. I am perfectly certain that there was no organisation whatever. The respectable inhabitants of Stratford-on-Avon deeply regret the rioting which has taken place there. I do not think it was so serious as has been made out. If it was it has been condoned, as three persons have been punished, and two other persons have been brought before the magistrates. In behalf of the whole of the inhabitants of Stratford-on-Avon, which is one of the quietest places to be found in England, I say that they deeply regret that there should have been any rioting or any injury to private property, and that while, in common with everyone, they rejoice at the turn events have taken in South Africa their earnest desire was that these rejoicings should not subject to loss any person, popular or unpopular, in the borough.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I am very anxious not to say a word which would create more excitement in this House, because I do feel that the House of Commons ought to be the principal guardian of freedom of speech and of peace in all parts of the country. I, however, wish to state in a sentence the reason why I think the motion made by my hon. and learned friend was justified and was called for

I confess I was not satisfied with the statement which was made by the Leader of the House in reference to these disturbances. He said, as I am sure every man in his position would say, that these disturbances were greatly to be condemned, and that the ringleaders in them ought to be punished. The Home Secretary also said— and so far it is satisfactory—that the Government feel their responsibility in the matter, and that they are prepared to discharge it. But the conclusion of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman, the Leader of the House, seemed to me to be capable of an interpretation which would have the effect not of restraining but, I will not say of promoting rioting, but of discouraging the right of public meeting by people who hold opinions which are not popular with the majority, and which are capable of exciting rioting and outrages of this character. I hope I may have been mistaken in that interpretation, but I confess that it had the effect in my mind of asserting that people who do not hold the opinions which unquestionably are the opinions of the great majority of the people ought to abstain from public and even, as I understand, from private meetings. In my view nothing could be more injurious than that such an opinion as that should go forth with the sanction of the House of Commons. I say we ought to maintain that people who hold opinions which are unpopular ought not to be discouraged, but should feel that they have a right to express those opinions, and that all the power of the House of Commons and of the Executive Government should be employed in protecting them in doing so. It is because I think some of the expressions used by the right hon. Gentleman were capable of the interpretation of a warning to people who hold unpopular opinions not to express them, that I think it was necessary that this matter should be raised in the House, and it is only from that point of view that I shall support this motion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I gather from the observations of the right hon. Gentleman, as well as from an interpolated remark of the hon. Gentleman who moved the adjournment, that what we are really discussing is not so much what has occurred recently in the country, not so much these most unhappy attacks upon person and property which have taken

place at Stratford-on-Avon and Scarborough, as the style and temper of the reply which I gave a few moments ago to the House; and so accurately and happily did the learned Gentleman forecast when he came down to the House what would be the tone and temper of my reply, that, not only was it a matter of common notoriety and knowledge that the adjournment was going to be moved, but he was prepared with a whole armful of papers. I was not aware that such an accurate forecast of the reply I gave to the House at question time could have been made, and as my style is apparently of so subtle a character I the more regret that it does not meet with the approval of Gentlemen opposite. By the courtesy of the press I have a verbatim transcript of the shorthand notes of the reply I gave to the House. I have re-read it during the course of the recent criticisms passed upon my reply, and I still say I see in that reply nothing to complain of. [Cheers.] I will not trouble the House with it again unless they wish to hear it. [Opposition cries of "Read!" and "No!"] I take it that hon. Gentlemen opposite do not want to hear it read again. [Cries of "Read, read!"] I have not the slightest objection. I said—

"Every case reported to my right hon. friend the Home Secretary has been carefully examined, and every such unhappy occurrence will be examined. There is not the slightest evidence that there has been any organisation of these demonstrations, which are absolutely spontaneous in their character as far as the evidence which has come before my right hon. friend is concerned. As the right hon. Gentleman is aware, it is the local authorities who are responsible both for the maintenance of orders and for the punishment of transgressors, and any aid which can be given to them in carrying out those duties, shall, of course, be readily afforded. I myself strongly deprecate these demonstrations, and I expect no good of them. I think that they are contrary to the best traditions of English life. For a large part of my political life I have belonged to a party which was unable to hold meetings in certain portions of the country; and therefore I am at least as anxious on this subject as the right hon. Gentleman who has been more fortunately situated than I myself could possibly be. I think that the responsibility rests not only upon the local authorities and upon those concerned in these unfortunate proceedings, but also upon those who called the meetings. It must be remembered that public feeling is necessarily deeply stirred at the present time. In every district of the country there are persons who have lost near relatives or friends in the present war; and nine-tenths of the country—ninety-nine hundredths of the country—believe, rightly or

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wrongly, that these meetings are called for an object which, if it were effectual, would render the recurrence of these great calamities possible. They think that in no other country in the world, and least of all the Transvaal itself, would such meetings be tolerated; and they are aware that the fact of such meetings being held is, by people who know little of our methods and traditions, used abroad as an indication of a divided country, and of a hesitating Government. In these circumstances, the tension of public opinion must necessarily be of a kind affording grave anxiety to those responsible for the public peace; and I venture to add that those who call these meetings ought to be careful lest they ask more of human nature than after all history shows that human nature is capable of giving."

That is what I said. That answer contains three propositions. The first is that the local authorities and not the Government are the responsible persons in repressing disorder and punishing crime, and that the Government will give to them every assistance in their power in carrying out that duty. The second proposition is that these proceedings are in themselves deplorable, and that this interference with free speech is not only contrary, I am sorry to say, not to the universal, but to the best traditions of the country, but does harm and not good to the cause it professes to promote. The third proposition—which I understand is the one disputed—is that the right of free speech in this country is of a kind which ought not to make the persons who wish to give their views to the world absolutely oblivious of the conditions under which they speak and of the disorder to which their speeches may give rise, and of the public difficulties and dangers which may ensue. That proposition has never been disputed by any reasonable man. There was a question asked this afternoon by an Irish Member about some disorder which had taken place in Cork in consequence of a Protestant preaching in the middle of a Roman Catholic town. There are times and there are places in which you ought to be careful how you provoke disorder, whether by Roman Catholics preaching in a Protestant town, or Protestants preaching in a Roman Catholic town. That is an illustration. Is there no responsibility on a person uttering his views as to the time and place at which he utters them? I say there is a great responsibility.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): The Attorney General did not say that in his
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answer. [Cheers, and loud Ministerial cries of "Order!"]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I said so.

MR. LOUGH, amid loud Ministerial cries of "Order!" and Opposition cries of "Go on!" attempted to make some further remarks.

*MR. SPEAKER, interposing, said: The hon. Gentleman has no right to interrupt an hon. Member who is speaking. He is not raising any question of order.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR, resuming, said: I can pardon the hon. Gentleman opposite when I remember his anxiety with regard to this question. He observes that the Attorney General did not say so. That is true. It is I who say so, and I presume that I have a right to an opinion which I have expressed not now for the first time in connection with such difficulties. The suggestion that the free public expression of opinion in this country upon the subject of this war has been repressed is really, I think, rather extravagant. In the newspapers of all sorts, in leaflets, in pamphlets, and in speeches, the views of those who are called, rightly or wrongly, pro-Boers, have been fully disseminated through the country; and, in my opinion, it is a duty thrown upon them to consider whether it is within their province—whether their consciences justify them in causing all this difficulty in the maintenance of the public peace by their choice of the occasion and place to express their opinions. It must be remembered that, while there is and ought to be full circulation given to those views, they are views which, in the nature of the case, whether we like it or not, must be distinctly offensive to the great mass of the people of this country. I am told that the programme, in the form of a sort of catechism of the Peace Committee, runs as follows:—

SIR R. T. REID: What Peace Committee?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It runs: "What do you want to do?—To stop this war. When?—Immediately. Why?—Because we are in the wrong. How?—By confessing our sins, and doing right. What sins?—Lying to cover conspiracy

fraud in making false claims, had faith in going back on our word, wholesale slaughter. How to do right?—To expose and punish the criminals"—I suppose they are the Government—"to compensate their victims"—I suppose they are the Boers—"and to make peace." That may be all right. All I say is, it is not agreeable to the majority of the people of this country.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Boer money pays for it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Those are sentiments which hon. Gentlemen who support the motion would think it advisable to press on the attention of those who have just lost dear friends and relatives in carrying on this war! Therefore I think that the third proposition which I have enunciated, that there is an obligation on those who hold these meetings, is a doctrine absolutely sound in itself and in no way inconsistent with that freedom of speech which we certainly on this side of the House are as anxious to maintain as the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He appears in the first place to have forgotten what the duties of the Home Department are. He appears to believe that it is in the power of my right hon. friend to send down troops and police from London to keep the peace at Stratford-on-Avon. The hon. Gentleman makes a mistake. Everything my right hon. friend can do will be done, but I must again say, at the risk of displeasing the right hon. Gentleman opposite or being thought to give him information upon a bit of political history with which he appears to be imperfectly acquainted—

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Entirely unacquainted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Entirely unacquainted—I say I could find him countless cases in London, in Scotland, in some of the mining districts of England, and at the present moment in Ireland, where it would not be possible to exercise that right of free speech which the right hon. Gentleman so greatly and properly values, but which has been so often interfered with by some of his best and most loyal supporters. I am sure no one regrets it more than he does, and I hope that when, by the natural evolution of

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fate, he may be the head of a responsible Government, and his Home Secretary may be appealed to upon like occasions, he will do his best, as we shall do our best, to see that the right of free speech in every legitimate form is safeguarded in every part of Her Majesty's dominions.

MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside): As I represent a division of Sheffield that has been affected by mob rule, I venture to say a word or two. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House has laid down what I think is a very dangerous doctrine. He took for his illustration the question of the preachers in the city of Cork, and he said that freedom of speech must be conditioned by place, time, and circumstance. He has already told us that human nature can only bear so much. Well, if that means anything it is a justification for the Catholics of Cork doing something to prevent those preachers from the exercise of what I believe is their undoubted liberty, and they would fall back on the philosophic doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman as their justification. But I wish the right hon. Gentleman had come down from the region of philosophy to fact, and had told us where is a suitable place, and what is a suitable time for those of us who—you may call us pro-Boer as much as you like—do believe that this war was unnecessary, who do believe the war was unjust, and who still believe that we love our country as fervently—[Cries of "Oh!"]—yes, who love our country as fervently and enthusiastically as the Hebrews on the other side— [Cries of "Order!"]

*MR. SPEAKER requested the hon. Member not to make remarks of a personal character.

MR. MADDISON: I, of course, Mr. Speaker, do not wish to transgress at all. I was led into that, I think, by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. We believe that we love our country as fervently, and are just as good patriots as those who take a different view; and what I wish to know from the Government is not merely that they shall affirm in so many words that these outrages are to be deprecated—what else could they do?—but that they will give us some assurance that they will take the same steps to prevent riot and outrage as they take during

a strike. The right hon. Gentleman twitted my hon. friend the Member for Leicester with having said that he did not know what the duties of the police were. I do not profess to know what the duties of the police are particularly, but this I do know, that while I myself was at Hull during the dockers' strike the predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman found some means and some opportunities of sending 100 or 200 mounted police into the town, and he took effective steps not to punish outrage so much as to prevent it. What we want is prevention here. Let me give the case of Sheffield. Last Saturday a meeting was to have been held which was summoned by private circular. One of the signatories of that circular was an hon. Member of this House—the hon. Member for the Holmfirth Division of Yorkshire. There were five or six signatories besides his own—most of them men known in Sheffield. The proposal was to have a tea, to be given to about 150 friends of peace. The reason why that private meeting was to be held in that way was because my friends in Sheffield took the same view as the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, but only from necessity. They said, "Well, the feeling in Sheffield among the rowdy section of the population"—because it is not the ordinary citizen who causes these things; it is the drunken vagabonds, the same class that you can always get; you can turn them out to loot and wreck anything you like. Well, my friends in Sheffield said—"There are the incitements of the press and various other causes, and perhaps it would be as well not to put the public authorities of Sheffield to some considerable trouble, and cause, it may be, injury to ourselves and others, and therefore much as we regret that, in the last year of the century, we have to take such underground methods, nevertheless we will do as law-abiding citizens, and we will have our meeting privately, we will have a cup of tea." That was their determination, but they did one thing. They invited Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner, and the distinct understanding was that it was not to be a meeting where there were to be any set speeches at all, but that they were merely to consult and take counsel as to what were the best steps to educate the people of Sheffield. [Laughter.] I do not appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite in

favour of education; but we on this side do not think it treason to educate public opinion. What was the result? That circular was printed *in extenso* in one of the Sheffield papers. No comment whatever was made, and in these times none was needed to cause a riot. But the evening paper did comment. Certain things were said in that paper, and the net result of it all was that in this great Yorkshire town those law-abiding citizens, with an hon. Member of this House amongst them, were compelled to abandon a purely private meeting to which it was never intended to give the appearance of a public meeting, not even to the extent of the Exeter Hall meeting. But that was not all. Of course a crowd gathered, and while I am glad to say there was no injury to anyone and no damage to property, of course they had to exhibit their patriotism by shouting through the streets and annoying as far as they could without injury certain prominent members of that small committee. Now, I submit that this is only a type of what is happening all over the country. The hon. and learned Member said the list he read was not an exhaustive one. Why, some of the worst cases do not come into the papers at all, and apparently none of them come into the hands of the Home Secretary. You have to smash £1,000 worth of property before any notice is taken of the disturbances. I note that the Leader of the House is particularly concerned when there is damage to property, but he has never shown the slightest concern for personal safety, although he feels it. I am not trying to impute to him wanton disregard. I know that that is not his feeling; but nevertheless there was the fact that, like a good Tory, he thought only of property—in his speech I mean—and thought nothing of the person. Let me give another case which occurred in London. I refer to a meeting of the Social Democratic Federation. Some of my stiffest battles have been fought against my friends the Socialists, who love me as much as they love the worst capitalists. The Social Democratic Federation are a poor body—a body of enthusiasts, but a body of men who have enough to do to manage to hire their little halls and to carry on their propaganda. These men met last Sunday in Harrow Road. What was their experience? Why, at the sound of a bugle—it must be a bugle

in these days—some thousand rowdies—they give the number at between 1,000 and 2,000—broke into the hall, broke the windows, and destroyed property to the value of £15. That is a serious state of affairs, and that is going on in all parts of the country. The right hon. Gentleman said these meetings would not be allowed in any other country than England, but surely he is not going to compare us to continental tyrannies. Does he consider that it is singular that we can do in London what they cannot do in St. Petersburg? Has the new Imperialism reduced England to that level? This is the England of Cromwell. This is the England of the great champions of freedom, and therefore it is quite right that we can do in England what they cannot do in other countries. Right hon. Gentlemen should be very careful how they treat this right of free speech and the question of personal liberty and safety. Along with many of my hon. friends near me I have stood up in times of danger and told the people that force was no remedy and they had no right to use it. But when the right hon. Gentleman talks about the "limits of endurance of human nature" how can we make that appeal to men? "Limits of endurance," what are they? Let me put two cases. Men go to an anti-war meeting and put forward certain views which they believe to be true. Those attending the meeting are given a chance to vote against the resolution. Where does the "limit of human endurance" come in? I will put the other case. A crowd of ragged men and women who have been for three months on strike, who have pawned every little article in the home, who have had only one meal of bread and water for a week; they see Dives going by in his carriage, surrounded by luxury and plenty, when some madcap says, "Let him have a stone, men!" If I were to adopt the philosophy of the right hon. Gentleman I should say, "Well, you are all right; there is a limit to human endurance." But I am not altogether sorry for the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, as there may be times coming when the necessity may arise for some justification of such conduct. I only say that it is a shame and a humiliation that the elementary principles of free speech should be scouted as they have been in this House to-day.

Mr. Maddison.

MR. LOUGH: There are many of us who think we are making a protest of the greatest political importance this afternoon, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not think I meant to be rude by my interruption when he was speaking, and still less did I intend to be rude to you, Sir, or the House. The point I meant to put was this. When an hon. friend from Ireland asked the Attorney General to express even the mildest disapproval of those meetings in Cork which are so likely to cause a breach of the peace, he refused to do so.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): Hon. Members from Ireland asked me no such question, and I gave no such reply. The hon. Member is strangely misinformed. The question was this—

"Whether he is aware that street preachers are at present creating disturbances in Cork, and whether steps will be taken to put a stop to this practice."

The answer I gave was—

"I am informed that on Sunday last an attack was made by a large crowd on the preachers who were conducting open-air services in the streets of Cork. Owing, however, to the prompt intervention of the police, no serious injury, I am happy to say, was sustained by any of the party, although two of them were unfortunately knocked down in the struggle that took place. With regard to the second paragraph, the hon. Member must be aware that the legality of street preaching has frequently been discussed in this House. The practice, unless it amounts to an obstruction of the public streets, is no offence by common or statute law, and the police have no power to put a stop to it, as suggested."

MR. LOUGH: I am exceedingly obliged to the right hon. and learned Member; it is in accordance with the courtesy he always extends to us that we should have been supplied with the full text of his answer. It proves my case to the hilt. What did the police do in Cork? They protected the people holding this meeting. The right hon. Gentleman said the right of free speech was valuable, and would be and had been maintained in Ireland. I know something about Ireland. There has been great bloodshed and disorder in connection with free speech in Ireland, and I approve of the Government maintaining the right of these men to exercise it. What we ask the Government to do to-night is to extend the same liberties to Great Britain which they are so keen to

defend in Ireland. The reason we are protracting this debate is that we think the reply of the Government, given by the Home Secretary and by the First Lord of the Treasury, will tend to increase these scenes of disorder which have disgraced the country during the last few months. I do not want to misrepresent the right hon. Gentleman, so I have taken down the exact words. What is the doctrine they have laid down? That if there is great unanimity of opinion people cannot be allowed to express arguments on the other side. ["Oh, oh!"]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman says he took these words down from either my right hon. friend or myself he is entirely mistaken.

MR. LOUGH: No; it was my fault of expression. I unfortunately mixed up two sentences. I intended to express the opinion, which I think is stated by him, that the argument which has been put forward is that if there is a great majority of opinion on one side the minority must be very cautious indeed in expressing their views. The right hon. gentleman accepts that—

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not accept either that or anything like it. I said that with a certain condition of public feeling, certain care must be exercised by persons making speeches.

MR. LOUGH: I will press that home a little farther, because it is of the greatest importance. The right hon. Gentleman did say that he personally was in favour of freedom of speech, because he had suffered from the contrary. Then he went on to say, "Remember human nature." He continued that ninety-nine out of one hundred people in this country had lost relatives in this war. ["No."] At any rate, the point was this. The right hon. Gentleman intimated that those who had lost relatives were the people who had interrupted the meetings. ["No."]. I will take another point. The right hon. Gentleman said that no other country would allow such meetings to be held, particularly the Transvaal; and finally he said, that these meetings would give the impression abroad that the country was divided in its opinion as to the war. I think I am generally right in those

points. My argument is that every one of those statements was a point in deprecation of, and limiting, the freedom of speech in which he believes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: You must not take me as admitting those phrases.

MR. LOUGH: I will put it this way, and take the full responsibility. In my opinion the right hon. Gentleman and the Home Secretary did go far this afternoon to limit the freedom of speech in unpopular causes. We on this side maintain that if we are to uphold democratic Government, the more unpopular a cause is the more important it is that all opinions thereupon should be heard. I want to refer to a case which has not been mentioned in detail. My reason for intervening in the debate was that I did not get a satisfactory answer to a question I put to the Home Secretary. I have a slight difficulty in arguing with the Home Secretary inasmuch as he has full official information, which I have not. I am informed that at Highbury on Sunday last a most peaceful meeting had been conducted for an hour and a half when a police officer with twenty constables arrived, and said, "This meeting is likely to promote disorder and it must be brought to an end." The police thereupon pushed the speakers off the platform and violently broke up the meeting. On those facts I put the question. [AN HON. MEMBER: They are not facts.] On those statements, then, I do not say a word against the police in London. If they have proper instructions they are an admirable body of men, but if they get a hint that they need not protect these orderly gatherings of citizens they will not do their duty. The third part of my question was, "And whether he can promise that such gatherings should be protected in the future." To that the Home Secretary made no answer at all, he would give no promise of protection to peacefully conducted public meetings. That is my point. Why did not the Home Secretary follow the example of the Attorney General for Ireland, by vindicating the right of free speech in London? The Government will not in the long run consult their own interests by refusing to give fair play to the miserable minority, if it be a miserable minority, who would like to see peace substituted for war, and who view with

grave misgivings the proceedings of the country at the present time. It is that we may vindicate this sacred right of the people that I have ventured to intervene in this debate, because I think that that right will not be preserved if the tone of the Government is not altered.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: By the leave of the House, I would like to say that I think the hon. Member has misunderstood the answer I gave him on the subject of the Highbury meeting. I did not give the hon. Member the promise he asked for because I understood he would assume that the police would continue to act, as they have always acted, so as to protect all peaceful meetings. I should have scorned to have implied that such a defence of the police was needed. In answer to the main question, what I said was that the police who were present found that the meeting, which had been conducted in a peaceful and orderly way for some time—I do not know for how long—was becoming very much excited; I will not say for what reason, though I have an opinion. There was a great deal of hooting, animated, in the opinion of the officer in charge, by the violent arguments of the speakers, and, in his view, which was supported by other officers who came up, there was every chance of a disturbance of the peace. Therefore, the meeting was very properly dispersed, and nothing further happened. I really think the police were in no way to blame.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): I have no wish to inflict a long speech on this interesting question, but I desire to make a practical suggestion. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary is aware that, quite apart from any other powers he possesses in regard to the administration of the police, he has a power, which I do not suggest he should exercise without very careful inquiry, under the Local Government Act of 1888, and the various Police Acts. If he is satisfied that in any particular case, in a county or a county borough, the police, or the standing joint committee who control the police, have not acted up to their full powers and responsibilities, the Home Secretary can, after due inquiry, disallow the whole or any portion of what are popularly known as the Police grants; that is to say, that portion of money

Mr. Lough.

which is paid out of the Local Taxation fund to the Exchequer contribution account of the police authorities within the county or borough, and by them transferred to the fund upon which the police force depends. If these grants are not paid the local ratepayers have to find the money which otherwise would be paid out of the Government contributions. What I suggest is that the Home Secretary should intimate in the proper quarters that if there is any case in which it can be shown that the full duty has not been discharged by the police, and that personal property or security of life or limb has suffered thereby, he will not hesitate to exercise this useful power. In taking such a course he would be perfectly justified, and public opinion would support his action. The ratepayers do not desire to lose any portion of the Police grants through the rowdyism of mobs, but if the police cannot control the exuberant spirits of persons excited by military successes, the only result will be that in the places where such riots, which are increasing in number throughout the country, obtain the upper hand, the local authorities may find themselves deprived of a considerable sum of public money. I make that suggestion, and that is the only contribution I desire to make to this debate.

MR. BARTLEY: It is certainly rather amusing to some of us who have fought a good many contested elections to hear what has been going on this evening. I have very often seen a great row at meetings. Some of the friends of the hon. Member for West Islington came to my district a short time ago and made such a disturbance that nobody was allowed to speak. At one of my election meetings there there was a regular free fight at the Shoreditch Town Hall, in which several people were hurt, and the Leader of the House was not allowed to speak. That was an organised arrangement by the Radicals of that day to put a stop to our meetings, and it is ridiculous to talk about it as anything else. But now, because some of their meetings are being disturbed—amongst others those of the hon. Member for Northampton, who is accustomed to say exactly what he likes on his own platform—there is all this fuss made. Nobody justifies the breaking of windows or the damaging of property, but when loyal people in a great country are delighted at the successes of

their Army, and when they parade the streets to show their joy at the relief of Ladysmith, and pass persons who are semi-traitors, I do not think it is at all unreasonable that there should be such a feeling as has been displayed. All I can say is that we are the most tolerant nation in the world. There is no other nation which would allow the treason to be talked that is talked, not merely in public meetings, but in a place it would be out of order for me to mention. I say emphatically it is a good thing that people have the spirit and are determined to exercise their right and to show to the public and the world at large that this country is practically unanimous, except for a handful of agitating scoundrels, and that a stop should be put to all this sort of thing. We are delighted at this exhibition of feeling throughout the country, and I hope it will continue. I do not wish to see any violence done, but if the other side excite the public to violence the blame is upon them, and not upon us. I believe that this agitation is got up and paid for, and that these scoundrelly papers are printed and published by the enemies of this country, and because these people cannot get a hearing in their own districts they make use of the tolerance of this House in order to say things which there is not a constituency in the country would tolerate or allow them to say in public.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): The right hon. Gentleman has told us that we should consider the time and the occasion of expressing our opinions. I should like to know whether he considers that any single meeting which has been broken up and where disturbances have occurred was held at an inappropriate time or on an inappropriate occasion. I quite recognise that there are circumstances in which persons ought to be careful not to irritate public opinion. In cases of great public excitement, no doubt, it would be a duty not to excite unduly public feeling. But does that mean that private meetings should not be held? Surely it only means that in case of public excitement no irritating display should be made, that there should be no processions in the streets; in a word, that there should be nothing done which would force or oblige people to listen to the expression of sentiments they do not wish to hear. If the right

hon. Gentleman confines his reproof or censure to exhibitions of that kind he will receive some amount of sympathy, but he apparently extends his censure to any and every kind. It is impossible to evade the conclusion that there is a desire to repress every expression of opinion hostile to the policy of the Government. That desire has been indicated in this House, and it is that desire, practically, which has led to this war. If we expressed our views as to the impropriety of the policy of the Government, as to the wrong steps they were taking, as to matters they had no right whatever to take up, we were told that we were encouraging President Kruger and the enemies of the country. I do hope that in future we will not refrain from protesting against what we consider to be an evil course from the supposed fear and the mistaken idea that it will have a bad influence abroad. It does not matter whether or not it will have a bad influence abroad. ["Oh, oh!"] I do not care two straws about the bad influence abroad if the arguments we are advancing are well founded; we ought to express them in order to influence the policy of the country. The attempt to stop all expression of public opinion has been most injurious and has really led the country into rushing into this war which nobody, except a very few, desired. If everybody had expressed themselves as they should have done—

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in order in discussing the state of things before the war began.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: Very well, Sir. The First Lord of the Treasury made reference to the fact that there were a number of relatives of persons who have been killed, and he seemed to indicate that anger and indignation would be natural in those cases, and that to some extent they were responsible for these disorders. That is not the case at all. The very reverse is the case. There is no class of persons in the country more disposed to deprecate the war and to find fault with the policy which led to it than the relatives of the persons who have suffered by it. It is the natural indignation of men who consider their relatives and friends have been wrongfully and murderously killed in this war. I am satisfied that the persons who make these dis-

turbances are not the relatives and friends, but the persons who cause these scenes are the common roughs of the towns, and they are fully persuaded that in doing so they have the protection of the Government and the authorities. The Government newspapers give them the cue, and scarcely a word of deprecation is uttered by those papers or by the Government supporters.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I should like to ask those hon. Members on this side of the House who have taken part in public meetings since the year 1886 how much liberty of speech they have been allowed to have at their public meetings by members of the party opposite. It does seem extraordinary that the complaint should now come from the Liberal party as to the way public meetings have been interfered with. We have been accustomed to nothing else on our side but to have our meetings interfered with, but we never came down whining to the House of Commons to move the adjournment of the House because our meetings had been disturbed. I am not a great admirer of the Liberal party, but I must say that the most scandalous incident in the history of the Liberal party which I have ever known is this, that while those who are nearest and dearest to us are fighting for their country at the front, the whole Liberal party to a man in this House rise in support of a motion for the adjournment in order to seize an opportunity of expressing their sympathies with those who are fighting against England. Such action does not redound to the credit of the Liberal party, and I do not think they will find it a paying thing in the long run. I regret the speech of the hon. Member for Dumfries Burghs, because I am afraid it will be very much misinterpreted in foreign countries, and the impression will go forth that there are two opinions in regard to this war, while hitherto the impression has gone forth that we were united. I regret the hon. Gentleman has made this motion, and I am sorry to think of the direful consequences which may follow.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I desire to say one or two words because, from an Irish point of view, this debate is extremely interesting. Most of the speeches which have been delivered

have been in the nature of an attack upon the First Lord of the Treasury for the attitude which he has taken up and for the doctrines he has laid down. I rise not for the purpose of delivering any attack upon the First Lord of the Treasury, but, as an Irish Member who has, from time to time, had some experience of disturbances at election times and of disturbances which follow eviction scenes, street preaching, and other matters in Ireland, to thank him sincerely and heartily for at least one of the doctrines he has laid down. From time to time in Ireland serious scenes of disorder have followed evictions. I have seen bloodshed and something approaching to very serious rioting follow evictions. I have seen property destroyed and houses attacked, but when the Irish people were charged with these things, and when a word was said upon their behalf, nobody that I ever heard of came forward with the plea in regard to these poor evicted people that human nature should be considered, and nobody laid down the doctrine that there was in these scenes of turmoil and disturbance a limit to the endurance of human nature. I think that is an excellent doctrine, and it is the best doctrine I have ever heard the First Lord of the Treasury propound. I thank the right hon. Gentleman for it, and I can promise him and the House most faithfully that the next time there follows a serious disturbance after an eviction in Ireland, if houses should be wrecked, if persons should be attacked and blood should be spilled, and property destroyed, when I or any other Irish Member am upbraided, we shall come here and apply the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman that "there is some limit to human endurance." Having said so much, I will refer to the speech of the last speaker, and the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Islington. They spoke as if these disturbances which have been complained of were solely confined to election meetings and election rows. Why, we know that election meetings and rows have nothing whatever to do with it. The hon. Member for North Islington said he had gone through many contested elections, but I think I can beat him in that, for I have been through seven or eight hotly contested elections, and I know what an election row is. As far as I am concerned, sometimes my majorities have been small

Mr. Bryn Roberts.

and sometimes large, but as far as I am concerned I should be the last person in the world to complain myself or sympathise with Liberal Members who complain of the storming of an election meeting and the taking of the platform. I think that is one of the most interesting features of electioneering. If for the future election contests were to be conducted without any excitement, and if every election meeting was to be conducted with the decorum of a Quakers' gathering, if those circumstances prevailed, as far as I am concerned, political life would have lost much of its charm; but, as far as I understand it, there is no complaint of interference with election meetings whatever. The suggestion is too absurd, and I ask the House what possible parallel or comparison can be drawn between a row at an election meeting such as that spoken of by the hon. Member for North Islington and what took place at Scarborough? There was no question of an election meeting or contest there. There was no question of a public meeting of any kind whatever; and what occurred? Why, every Member of this House and every man who loves liberty must read with regret what occurred. The business premises of Mr. Joshua Rowntree were wrecked and smashed to pieces, and the business premises of other members of his family were also wrecked and smashed to pieces. But, not satisfied with that, the riotous mob, after demolishing the business premises of this family, went to their private residence, where their wives and children were, and riddled it with stones and attacked them in a most violent and disorderly manner. That is what I take it the hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the adjournment of the House complained of, and not of an election row. I take the instance with reference to an attack made upon the house of a shopkeeper in Stratford-upon-Avon. The man did not propose to hold a meeting, but his shop was attacked and not only were the windows broken, but the mob broke into the house and demolished all his stock-in-trade, broke all the furniture and all the china which it was his business to sell in his shop, and left him there practically ruined. That is what is complained of. We are told that the police are doing all they can, and we are informed that they will protect the property of these people. If these disturbances had been in Ireland

the police would not have been so slow. Take Dublin, or Limerick, or Waterford, where the people, or a vast majority of them, sympathise with the Transvaal, and a great majority of them believe this war is unjust. Suppose the minority, say in my constituency, proposed to hold in Cork or Waterford an indoor meeting by ticket to condemn the Transvaal Republic and support the war; and suppose that on the evening of such meeting a crowd of Nationalists, forming the overwhelming majority of the people, and being intensely excited, broke into the meeting, smashed the hall, and injured the people who participated in those gatherings, what would have happened? Why, the hall would have been entered by an armed force of police with batons and rifles and bayonets by their side, and hundreds of men would have been made amenable to the law. But in England there is no protection whatever for the minority, and if I desired to belong to a minority I would rather belong to a minority in Ireland than in England. Reference has been made to street preaching in Cork, and the First Lord of the Treasury seemed to think that, because those meetings were allowed, the police should not interfere in this country with such meetings as we have been discussing to-night. What comparison can you draw between the man who will insist upon preaching doctrines in the street, where he knows the people are opposed to him, and the men who call a meeting and say that nobody need come to the meeting without a ticket? There is no comparison at all between the two cases, and I say the analogy of street preaching in Cork does not compare. I will once more heartily and sincerely thank the First Lord of the Treasury for his "limit to human endurance" doctrine, and I promise him that the next time we have in Ireland a scene of violent disorder among Irish Nationalists, and he attempts to prosecute me in the matter—which is more than likely—I shall come to this House and put in the doctrine laid down by the First Lord of the Treasury, that even where property is destroyed, where blood is shed, where personal liberty is interfered with, before the law and the police are called in you have got to make every allowance for the limit which human endurance can stand.

*MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): The arguments brought forward by the hon. Member who has just sat down, and the analogy he has drawn from the case of Ireland, do not dispose of the matter as comfortably as right hon. Gentlemen opposite seem to think. I can remember a time when they were less interested in the maintenance of public order in Ireland, and when, in reference to the incidents of evictions, they themselves used this very argument about the limit of human endurance very much in the same way as the First Lord of the Treasury has used it to-day. They have used this argument and they have used it solely for the purpose of demonstrating that in respect of public disturbances this argument of human nature and endurance operates in favour of popular majorities at all times and at all places. The argument means that the persons who provoke hostile majorities have also their responsibilities; the street preacher even has his responsibilities. But to say that by no means divests or relieves the Government or the local authorities of their responsibilities, and nothing of the kind was intended by the remark of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. It ought not to be necessary to say these things, but after the attempt which has been made to make political capital out of it, it is necessary to address arguments to hon. Gentlemen opposite which ought to be spoon meat to babes. The Member for the Cricklade Division says the Home Secretary has the power in his hands to assist in this matter of suppressing disorder by stopping the Government grant to local police forces in cases where they have not interfered with these riotous proceedings. That doctrine is not only bad law but it is bad policy.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I did not put it in that way. I said that such power ought to be used in exceptional cases only, and that the Home Secretary might let it be known that he has the power, and that he would use it under exceptional circumstances.

*MR. STUART-WORTLEY: The hope of the noble Lord was that a general impression would be created somehow or other that the Government had a responsibility in this case. If the noble Lord's words do not mean that they do

not mean anything. The Home Secretary has undoubtedly the power to refuse his certificate to a local police force for want of numbers or for the want of general efficiency. There is no doubt that there might be some particular case of a breach of public order which might be taken as evidence of general inefficiency, but is that the case here? Is the Home Secretary to say to every police force when at the end of the year he comes to give his certificate and the Government grant, that "upon such a day and upon such an occasion public opinion, under circumstances totally exceptional and under conditions of peculiar excitement, boiled over just enough to produce a deplorable riot, and therefore the grant must be withheld"? There is not a municipality in this country which is not as ready to preserve law and order and liberty of speech as the hon. Gentlemen opposite who regard themselves as the only custodians of law and order. This indictment which has been brought is really an indictment of our great popular institutions under which law and order are maintained.

SIR. H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cordially agree with what the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has said, and with what the Leader of the House said with regard to the responsibility which rests at a time of great local excitement upon those who call a public meeting to express something which is disagreeable to the neighbourhood. I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down that any one, whether a street preacher or an evicting landlord, who commits an act calculated to excite a disturbance of public order, has a great responsibility. But the point of this case lies precisely in this—that the great majority of the instances which have been referred to have not been public meetings at all. There are two classes of persons aggrieved—those who have not been connected with any meeting whatever, but who simply on account of opinions imputed or genuine—simply on account of opinions which they are supposed to entertain, have been subjected to coercive proceedings on the part of their neighbours; and there are those who have called meetings together for the purpose of expressing their opinions in private. In the latter case only those people have been asked to attend who are

of like mind in political matters; but other men, holding different opinions on a purely political subject, have chosen to come and prevent the holding of the meetings. Those are the circumstances to which we have endeavoured to direct the attention of the Government. When I put the question on the Paper my object was to stimulate the activity and attention of the Government. I fully expected, from all that I had heard and from my natural conception of what the feelings and desires of the Government would be, that they would have strongly condemned these proceedings. But instead of that—though the right hon. Gentleman did, indeed, deprecate them as very improper and wrong—he devoted three-quarters of his speech to an exposition of the crime committed against order by those who had suffered from the riots. Anyone listening to the right hon. Gentleman's speech would have thought that he considered the conduct of those who had called the meetings, or who were the subjects of the violence, was quite as reprehensible as that of those who disturbed the meetings. The right hon. Gentleman said that they had no business to hold meetings for the purpose of expressing opinions which were not agreeable to their neighbours. [Ministerial cries of "No."] "Agreeable" was the word which the right hon. Gentleman used. That is a limitation on freedom of opinion and speech we have never heard here before.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must be peculiarly unfortunate in my utterances. I thought that the version which the right hon. Gentleman gave at the beginning of his speech was perfectly accurate; but I was certainly never guilty of the observation which he has just attributed to me.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: When the right hon. Gentleman was defining those who had incurred the responsibility to which he very properly pointed, he referred to them as those who entertained and wished to express opinions which were "not agreeable" to ninety-nine hundredths of the country. As to the other theory which he put forward—that on this occasion the rioters were those who were excited by the recollection of the loss of relatives and friends, but that argument has already been answered by my hon. friend behind me—you will not

find among the relatives of those who have fallen the least strong in condemnation of the war. The hon. Member for Islington went so far as to dub all those who held a different opinion from his own as semi-traitors.

MR. BARTLEY: I protest against that statement. I never did anything of the sort. I referred to things which were said by many persons, and I said that they were semi-traitorous. I would go further than that even in many cases.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If opinions of disapproval of the war are semi-traitorous—

MR. BARTLEY: I never said so.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There are many officers and men fighting in the war who are semi-traitors. We must protest now, as we have protested all along, against mixing up two things which are entirely distinct—opinions as to the origin and necessity for the war, upon which there may be many differences, and opinions as to the obligations upon us all, when our country is engaged in this great war, to give her all the support in our power. I hold, notwithstanding what the hon. Member has said, that he is really the higher and better patriot who, not approving of the origin of the war in all respects, yet supports his country in the hour of her trial. The object which I had in putting the question on the Paper was to stimulate the action of the Government. The Home Secretary says that it lies with the local magistrates. But he is the local magistrate in the metropolis. He is responsible for Mile End, Exeter Hall, Paddington, and other places. Any one who reads the local newspapers of the districts in which the interrupted meetings have been held will see exactly what has happened. Again and again disturbances and riots have been directly instigated by the local newspapers. The case of Sheffield has been mentioned. I have in my pocket extracts which I could read to the House from local newspapers, and all to this effect:—"A private meeting is to be held by these traitorous persons. No one is to be admitted without a ticket. I wonder whether a ticket can be obtained. I think I shall buy one; and, I hope others will be there." They pointed

out also that there were different entrances to the hall to which invited persons could gain an entrance. All that is a distinct incitement of the familiar nature indicated by the saying, "Don't nail his ears to the pump."

MR. STUART WORTLEY: Does the right hon. Gentleman say he is quoting from a Sheffield newspaper?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes.

MR. STUART WORTLEY: Quoting?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Well, I said I would not read it, but I have it in my pocket. [An HON. MEMBER: Read it.] It is the *Sheffield Weekly News*. It says, "There will be tea at 5.30 p.m." [Laughter.] Does the hon. Gentleman who laughs never take tea at 5.30 p.m.? "And if you want to join the tea you are requested to apply early to" so and so, "but you won't be admitted unless you bring your circular. We do not want any of those wicked patriots singing 'God Save the Queen' and voting against our pious adoration of the nineteenth century St. Paul," and so on. And they quote the circular, "from which you see you are invited afterwards to spend a pleasant evening vilifying your country, insulting her flag, and glorifying her enemies. Will I be there? Well, I fancy so, if I can beg, borrow, or steal a circular, and I know some others who will accompany me. Do not forget, this' afternoon at the Cutlers' Hall, at 5.30 p.m." There is a great deal more to the same effect, and they quote the instance of Edinburgh, and glory in the fact that a number of students in Edinburgh bought tickets of admission not intended for them in order to create a riot. I merely quote that as an instance of the kind of thing that is going on all over the country. The right hon. Gentleman will say, "We have no control over the newspapers; these may be very foolish, wicked, or indiscreet newspapers, but we cannot control them." No, but this was an opportunity for the Government to bring the whole weight of their authority to bear in favour of the right of free speech. The Home Secretary, as has already been remarked, was particularly moved by the question of property.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: No.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Well, he always quoted the destruction of property. But there is the risk to life.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: My remark as to the destruction of property was with reference to a particular case as to getting compensation under the Riot (Damages) Act. There was no danger to life.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Property does not matter so much, and even a broken head does not so much matter; there is something behind and below it which is a much more serious question—it is the right of free opinion and the free expression of opinion. The breaking of plate-glass windows is a disgraceful proceeding and is to be regretted, but plate-glass windows can be restored; but if you take away the right of free speech, which the people of this country have always enjoyed, you cannot so readily restore that. I regret exceedingly that the two right hon. Gentlemen have not given a more satisfactory answer to us on this question, but I am quite content, because at all events we have done our part in vindicating freedom of opinion. The right hon. Gentleman has said that his party has been deprived in some instances of that right; I can only say that I am not aware that that has occurred at any place except during the excitement of a general election, when meetings are, I believe, in this country, not in mine, broken up by both sides. I should like to be told if there is any case, except that of the organised riots at Aston, near Birmingham. I cannot express an opinion until I revive the facts, but I cannot call to mind any other case in which similar acts were committed and in which a private meeting, held by Conservatives in order to exchange their own ideas amongst themselves, was interrupted and broken in upon by members of the other side in politics.

MR. C. P. SCOTT (Lancashire, Leigh): There is obviously among hon. Gentlemen opposite great sympathy with these rioters throughout the country. Indeed, there would appear to be a certain amount of sympathy with them on the part of the Leader of the House. Hon. Gentlemen, by their action, are letting the cat out of the bag, and are showing

the real spirit which animates the Conservative party, not only in the country but in this House. I think it concerns every lover of his country that there should be liberty to consider the grave issues before us at the present time. We are told we ought to hold our peace because of those who have lost relatives and friends in the war. No one can have more sympathy than I have with those who have lost relatives and friends, and I believe that feeling is common to both sides and to all parties; but we ought to try and see that we get the best return possible for this sacrifice of blood and treasure. [Interruption.] The spirit of the mob has invaded the floor of this House, and hon. Members are not true patriots who would put down discussion on this subject by clamour and would have an opportunity now which may not occur later of bringing this war to an end on honourable terms.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not at liberty to go into the question of the war on the question of disturbances in the country.

MR. C. P. SCOTT: An attempt is being made by these disturbances to drown discussion at the only time when discussion can be useful, and to substitute mob violence for reason and for humanity. [Renewed interruption.] It is absolutely useless to reason with certain hon. Members—about as useless as to reason with a mob in the street. I think the country sees the spirit which animates those who

have made the war, and who are determined to carry it through to the bitter end. They may have the best of the shouting—

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member does not appear to me to be addressing himself to the question of the disturbances in the country.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I cannot hear anything the hon. Gentleman says.

Question put.

MR. C. P. SCOTT: In the disturbance I did not hear, Sir, whether you had put the question or not, and I wish to know whether I am at liberty to address the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: I understood that the hon. Member had finished his speech. In fact, I saw the hon. Member sit down, and I put the question. It was after I had put the question that I saw him rise again.

MR. C. P. SCOTT: I sat down, Mr. Speaker, because I understood you had risen to call me to order.

*MR. SPEAKER: After I had pointed out to the hon. Member that he was out of order he remained sitting.

The House divided:—Ayes, 120; Noes, 229. (Division List No. 67.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
Billson, Alfred
Blake, Edward
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight

Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Colville, John
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Dewar, Arthur
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Duckworth, James
Dunn, Sir William
Ellis, John Edward
Evans, S. T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir F. H. (Southampton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry

Fowler, Dr. Joseph Francis
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hogan, James Francis
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David Brynmor (Swn'sea)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hon. Sir U.
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch, Sir John George S.
Labouchere, Henry
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qu'n.C.)

McCrae, George
 M'Dermott, Patrick
 M'Ewan, William
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
 Maddison, Fred.
 Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
 Mortou, E. J. C. (Devonport)
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 G'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 O'Malley, William
 Palmer, Geo. Wm. (Reading)
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Pickersgill, Edward Hare

Power, Patrick Joseph
 Price, Robert John
 Randell, David
 Reckitt, Harold James
 Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Redmond, William (Clare)
 Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighsh.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
 Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarshire)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Souttar, Robinson

Steadman, William Charles
 Strachey, Edward
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, Alf. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Ure, Alexander
 Wallace, Robert
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Yoxall, James Henry
 TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
 Mr. M. Arthur.

NOES.

Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
 Allsopp, Hon. George
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold, Alfred
 Arrol, Sir William
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bailey, James (Walworth)
 Baird, John George Alexander
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
 Barnes, Frederic Gorell
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Beckett, Ernest William
 Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
 Bethell, Commander
 Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
 Biddulph, Michael
 Bil, Charles
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bond, Edward
 Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
 Boulnois, Edmund
 Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
 Brassey, Albert
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brown, Alexander H.
 Brymer, William Ernest
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Butcher, John George
 Carson, Rt. Hon. Edward
 Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lances.)
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derb'shire)
 Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Charrington, Spencer
 Clare, Octavius Leigh
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
 Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
 Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Hereford)
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
 Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Currie, Sir Donald
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh

Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Denny, Colonel
 Dickinson, Robert Edmond
 Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
 Donkin, Richard Sim
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
 Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
 Drage, Geoffrey
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph D.
 Faber, George Denison
 Fardell, Sir T. George
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manch'r)
 Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robt. Bannatyne
 Firbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Fry, Lewis
 Galloway, Wm. Johnson
 Garfit, William
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
 Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Godson, Sir A. Frederick
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Green, W. D. (Wendesbury)
 Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Halsey, Thomas Frederick
 Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. W.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Heath, James
 Helder, Augustus
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hosier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
 Hudson, George Bickersteth

Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
 Jackson, Rt. Hon. W. Lawies
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
 Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
 Keswick, William
 Knowles, Lees
 Lafone, Alfred
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. Wm. E. H.
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Leighton, Stanley
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpl.)
 Lonsdale, John Brownlee
 Lowles, John
 Lowther, Rt. Hn. James (Kent)
 Lowther, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Cumb'land)
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 Maclean, James Mackenzie
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
 Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir Herbert E.
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Middlesmore, J. Throgmorton
 Milbank, Sir Powlett Chas. J. Hn.
 Milner, Sir Frederick George
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Monk, Charles James
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropsh.)
 Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'shire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
 Muntz, Philip A.
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bate)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Myers, William Henry
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander

Nicol, Donald Ninian	Russell, Gen F. S. (Cheltenham)	Tomlinson, Wm. Elw. Murry
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)	Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)	Tritton, Charles Ernest
Parkes, Ebenezer	Rutherford, John	Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlingt'n)	Ryder, John Herbert Dudley	Wanklyn, James Leslie
Penn, John	Sammel, Harry S. (Limehouse)	Warr, Augustus Frederick
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur	Seely, Charles Hilton	Webster, Sir Richard E.
Pierpoint, Robert	Seton-Karr, Henry	Welby, Lt.-Col. ACE (Tainton)
Pilkington, Rich (Lanes Newt'n)	Sharpe, William Edward T.	Welby, Sir C. G. E. (Notts.)
Platt-Higgins, Frederick	Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)	Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Plunkett, Rt. Hn. Horace Curzon	Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)	Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Pollock, Harry Frederick	Simcon, Sir Barrington	Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp	Sinclair, Louis (Romford)	Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward	Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)	Williams, Jos. Powell (Birm.)
Purvis, Robert	Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)	Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert	Spencer, Ernest	Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne	Stanley, E. Jas. (Somerset)	Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks)
Renshaw, Charles Bine	Stanley, Sir H. M. (Lambeth)	Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Rentoul, James Alexander	Stewart, Sir M. J. M. Taggart	Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. S.
Richards, Henry Charles	Stone, Sir Benjamin	Wyndham, George
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.	Strauss, Arthur	
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson	Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley	
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)	Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxford Univ.)	
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye	Thorburn, Sir Walter	
Round, James	Thornton, Percy M.	

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

DOGS REGULATION.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derbyshire): I beg to ask leave to introduce a Bill to amend the law relating to dogs. The muzzling order having done its duty there is now room for a more moderate measure, and local authorities are anxious to get certain powers with regard to the control of dogs. In the Bill introduced last year there were some provisions not so unreasonable I think as some persons represented them to be, but they evoked a great deal of opposition, and this year we are content to submit less extensive proposals. There are regulations relating to collars in the Bill which have been inserted at the instance of urban authorities, and the County Councils are given the option of imposing similar regulations in their own districts. The Bill will also clear up certain doubts as to the law, and will enable local authorities to make by-laws with a view to the prevention of sheep-worrying.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if the abolition of the muzzling order is universal throughout the United Kingdom?

*MR. LONG: The Bill has nothing to do with the abolition of the muzzling order which is imposed by the central authority. The new powers are to be conferred solely on the local authority.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): Is the Bill to be limited to dogs?

Bill to amend the Law relating to Dogs, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, and Mr. Attorney General for Ireland.

DOGS REGULATION BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Dogs," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time on Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 125.]

NAVAL RESERVE (MOBILISATION).

Bill to amend the Royal Naval Reserve (Volunteer) Act, 1859, in relation to calling out the Volunteers for actual service, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney, Mr. Goschen, and Mr. Attorney General.

NAVAL RESERVE (MOBILISATION) BILL.

"To amend the Royal Naval Reserve (Volunteer) Act, 1859, in relation to calling out the Volunteers for actual service," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time on Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 126.]

WAR LOAN BILL.

[THIRD READING.]

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): A great deal of surprise was felt

when it was found that this Bill had passed through Committee without a single word being said about it or without a single division being taken upon it. On the Second Reading of the Bill I, at some length, pointed out the reasons why I could not approve of it; and at this stage I desire to renew the protest which I then made against it. It is not necessary to justify the position the Irish Members have taken up on this Bill, to go at any length at all into the policy which has brought about the present war which many of us consider to be so iniquitous, so unnecessary, and so absolutely unjust. Apart altogether from the policy of the war, to provide the expenses of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer asks us for this money, we may object to this loan because we consider it is quite unfair to saddle Ireland in any way whatever with any of the extraordinary charges for the war. I have already pointed out that the financial condition of Ireland is altogether peculiar, and that circumstances exist in connection with the taxation of Ireland which, in the opinion of the Irish people, would justify a very exceptional treatment of Ireland in all Imperial taxation of this kind. Of course this War Loan Bill will pass, and the Irish people will not feel, any more than the people of this country, the full effects of what is being done for some years to come. But sooner or later these thirty millions will have to be repaid, and they will be repaid by means of taxation levied upon Ireland, and which will fall more heavily upon the Irish people than upon the people of this country. There is one aspect of the Irish view of the case to which I wish to refer, because it came to the front at question time to-day. I asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he could grant a Return showing how much had been spent in Ireland in the last year upon warlike stores and supplies, and how much had been spent in England and Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman refused to give me the Return on the ground that its preparation would occupy a great deal of time, and that the War Office authorities are very busy at the present moment. No doubt that is a reason of a sort why the Return should not be given, but, from the Irish point of view, it is a most unsatisfactory reason. No doubt the War Office is busily engaged just now, but if we had our way there would be more time on their hands. Nevertheless, no matter

Mr. William Redmond

how the War Office may be engaged, I say when we consider the large sums of money that are being spent for the purposes of War, we in Ireland are entitled to information which will let us see, and our people know, how much of that money, directly or indirectly, is spent for the benefit of Irish trade and the Irish working people. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might, in my opinion, greatly facilitate the passage of this Bill, which must pass, in spite of our opposition to it, if he would be good enough to say to us that he would use his influence with the War Office, or whatever the proper authority may be, to have a Return prepared, so that the Irish people and the public at large may be able to see at a glance, and to understand what proportion of these vast sums for war supplies is being spent among the people of Ireland, and what proportion amongst the people of the United Kingdom. This day week a debate will take place in the House upon the whole condition of Irish taxation and the findings of the Royal Commission which inquired into the relative taxation of Great Britain and Ireland; and I cannot myself see that it will be possible in that debate to present in the fullest manner the Irish aspect of the case, unless we are in a position to show from information which the Government Departments can alone give us how much of this taxation is spent upon the Irish working people, and how much upon the working people of Scotland and England. This may not seem to be an important matter, but how is it that our constituents urge us to offer such strenuous objections to such measures as this Bill, which raises such an enormous amount of money? There are several reasons. First, because they hold that the war is unnecessary and unjust; second, because they believe that the present taxation of Ireland is too great, and that they should not be burdened with fresh taxation; and third, and not altogether least, because when they read in the newspapers of the millions and millions of money being voted for the purposes of war, they find hardly a sixpence is ever spent for the benefit of Irish workers and Irish trade. No doubt this war is popular enough in certain quarters in England. War is always popular because the people will not feel the full weight of the burden until the money was to be raised by direct or indirect taxation. The war is popular to

a certain extent, because the money will be largely distributed amongst the great Army and Navy Departments of this country, and hundreds of thousands of British workmen will receive this money back in the shape of wages for work done in the dockyards and factories of England. We have not a single dockyard in Ireland worth talking about, and the Government never even build as much as a torpedo boat in Ireland. I am not going to discuss the Navy Estimates now, but the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer knows that what I say is perfectly true, and although he may laugh I can assure him that the people in Ireland, when they see these repeated applications for money, almost the first thing they say is, "How much of this money is to be spent in Ireland? Hardly anything." There are one or two comparatively small Army Clothing Factories in Ireland, but they get very little work. Hon. Gentlemen opposite who represent populous Irish constituencies know that there are plenty of strong young men and young women who would make ideal factory hands, and we find them with absolutely no work to do.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is speaking to a general question, which is rather remote from the War Loan Bill.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I will endeavour, Sir, as far as I can, to keep to the strict letter of your ruling. I must say I was endeavouring—rather fairly, I thought—to point out why it is that I was obliged to object to large sums of money being raised for warlike purposes. Of course, if I am out of order I will not continue. I do not suppose that a single £1 out of the 30 millions will ever find its way into the pockets of the Irish wage-earners, and under these circumstances it is not unreasonable that we should come here and offer our strongest protest against this enormous loan. Independently of this loan the Irish people have to bear increased taxation of a very unfair kind, and the taxes on commodities fall heavier on the people of Ireland, relatively speaking, than on the people of this country. This loan of 30 millions would be sufficient to set the people of Ireland, Scotland, and England in a position of commercial and industrial prosperity, and industries which are flagging for a want of a little encouragement would forge ahead if they were only

subsidised a little. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade laughs at industries being subsidised. We know that in the West Indies the Government give large sums of money to assist the sugar industry.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Making a speech in Parliament is something like riding a bicycle—a very small thing will put you off your balance; and if the right hon. Gentleman interrupts me I cannot help answering his interruption. I say that this money might be expended to much greater advantage than in the prosecution of the war. We are told that up to the 31st of this month the war will have cost twenty-three millions. Well, at the end of the month there can be little doubt that the predominance of the power of the British Empire will be pretty well established in South Africa. I do not say that you will be at Pretoria, but so far it has been quite established that these two small Republics in the end will have to submit to your yoke with the power pitted against them. Why not accept the friendly offices of the President of the United States, and bring about a peace honourable to the combatants on both sides, and which will secure everything desired by British subjects in the Transvaal—a peace which will conduce to good feeling and happy relations in the future between the Dutch and British populations? Why should not such a peace be concluded now? You will be enabled to enforce your demands from Bloemfontein as effectively as from Pretoria. What is the use of trampling these small Republics out of existence altogether. What is the use of continuing this war so as to make the people of the world and the Dutch race in Africa think that it is to be a war of extermination? Why not ask if these people are satisfied with the terms you are prepared to give? It is quite possible, if you did ask them, especially through the medium of a friendly Power like America, that it would satisfy them if you safeguarded your interests for the future, and granted a peaceful settlement which would not altogether outrage the sense of independence and bravery which the people of South Africa had shown. We have heard threats that Mr. Kruger is to be held responsible for this, that, and the

other. I suppose that means that you will not be satisfied until Mr. and Mrs. Kruger are shipped off to St. Helena. I ask the Colonial Secretary, who ought to be satisfied at the present time with the success of his schemes and plans, if terms of peace could not be arranged now, by the friendly action of a friendly Power. If that were done what would be the first result? I believe that the liberty loving countries of the world would say that England had acted well, and that the Dutch people in South Africa would become reconciled.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in order in discussing the consequences of the peace.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I have not the slightest intention, Mr. Speaker, of getting outside your ruling. One result which peace would have—and in this I believe I am quite in order—would be that this loan of thirty millions would be absolutely unnecessary, and the country would be saved thirty millions in hard cash and in taxes, and instead of devoting that enormous sum to a war of extermination, bloodshed and misery, it might be devoted to some other national purpose which would be for the benefit and general utility of the community at large. It does seem to me that at this stage of the war it is uncalled for, it is unnecessary, it is unstatesmanlike for the Government to come forward and ask for thirty millions more in order to prosecute the war. Do you expect that a continuance of the war is going to cost thirty millions more? How is it going to be spent? How is it going to be done? The whole thing seems to me so outrageous, so unjust, and so unnecessary, that I cannot, at this stage, refrain from opposing this loan, in the interests of the great mass of the people of this country who agree with me. But I oppose it principally in behalf of my constituents, because it is to be applied in an unjust war, because we are already over-taxed, and from the very matter of fact and plain material point of view that, whereas the working people in Great Britain are getting a large part of this great sum back in the shape of wages, we in Ireland will not get a single £1. I conclude by asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer, quite seriously, if he could consider whether it be possible between now and

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this day week, when we have our set debate on the financial relations of Ireland, to see that some information is given us to show what proportion of this money is to be spent in Ireland for warlike stores and supplies. The Chancellor of the Exchequer may say that that is unnecessary. It is necessary, and for this reason; we are told that it may be possible we are overtaxed to a small extent, but that we get compensations in other directions.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot in this debate ask for information for the purposes of another debate.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I thought it would be more convenient to put the question to the right hon. Gentleman now than to put it on the Paper.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I could not answer the question in any case, as it relates to a matter which is not in my Department. It should be addressed to the representative of the War Department.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I did ask the right hon. Gentleman to use his influence to get the information supplied, because unless this information is given our debate cannot be brought to a satisfactory or useful conclusion.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I do not wish to associate myself with the strong protest against this Bill which has come from the Irish bench. I venture to say that this is the only part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's war proposals that I could approve of. I think the Budget is a very onerous one, and that if we have to find this additional money we could not do it better than by way of loan. But there are two faults I have to find with the Bill. One of them is its name. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have taken a more judicious name than "War Loan Bill" and "War Stock Bill." I like to see this House exercise its influence in favour of peace. I know that wars must come sometimes, but we should try to carry out our arrangements in a way that would not popularise war. The loan might have been called "The South African Loan Bill" or "The Supply Loan

Bill." It would have gone equally well, and in the course of time the war, and all that led to the war, would have been forgotten. Another fault I have with the Bill is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not told us how the loan will be redeemed. If he would throw further light on that subject he would make his scheme more perfect than at the present moment, and make it more acceptable to the country. Another point is, why is this Bill for thirty-five millions, and yet only thirty millions are to be issued? I see a rumour in the papers that the other five millions may be issued soon. If the right hon. Gentleman has any information to give on these points we shall be glad to hear it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that up to Saturday last the number of applicants for the loan was eighteen thousand. I do not think that a very large number. If the loan was distributed to the amount of £500 to each applicant it would require 60,000 applicants to take up the entire loan. I do not desire to offer any opposition to the Bill, for on the whole it is the best way the finances of the war could be managed.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) said he felt it his bounden duty to associate himself with the hon. Member for East Clare in making a protest against the war. He wanted to know what amount of money Ireland would be compelled to contribute to it. Their great objection was that they would have to pay and receive nothing in return. The war had been from the beginning unjust, and in consequence they felt unnecessary pressure was going to be placed on the shoulders of the Irish people, who were now the working classes, seeing that the landlords had been removed from all taxation. Irish

Members were there to insist that in Ireland taxation should not be increased for Imperial purposes, seeing that the taxation of Ireland already far exceeded the burden she could bear. Subject to the correction of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, they should have to contribute roughly £2,000,000 of this £30,000,000.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot discuss under this Bill the comparative taxation of Ireland and other parts of the United Kingdom.

MR. FLAVIN said he simply wanted to ask a question arising out of the Bill—what amount of that £30,000,000 they in Ireland were to be required to contribute? But if that was not a fair question, he would bow to the Speaker's ruling. So far as he could see, there was no difference between paying direct taxation and paying the interest on a loan of this description. It was the duty of the Irish Members to raise their voices in protesting against it. Ireland had received no benefit either directly or indirectly, and he should take every opportunity of protesting a loan for the purposes of prolonging a war which the Irish regarded as unjust and inhuman. The Government might prolong the war and take away the independence of the Boers if they chose, but if they did they would find in years to come there would be stronger opposition to British rule in the Transvaal than ever there was in Ireland.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 172; Noes, 23. (Division List No. 68).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarras, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Barlow, John Emmott
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.

Billson, Alfred
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Broadhurst, Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry

Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colville, John
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dewar, Arthur
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duckworth, James
Dunn, Sir William

Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
 Fardell, Sir T. George
 Farquharson, Dr. Robert
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Fenwick, Charles
 Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Firlbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 Forster, Henry William
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Garfit, William
 Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry)
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
 Heath, James
 Helder, Augustus
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Jones, David Brynmor (Swans.)
 Keswick, William
 Knowles, Lees
 Lafone Alfred
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorksh.)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. Wm. Edw. H.
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverp'l)

Lonsdale, John Brownlee
 Lough, Thomas
 Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Lyell, Sir Leonard
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Crae, George
 M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
 M'Killop, James
 M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn W. F.
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milner, Sir Frederick George
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Monk, Charles James
 More, Robert J. (Shropshire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
 Muntz, Philip A.
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Myers, William Henry
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Palmer, George W. (Reading)
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Penn, John
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs, Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plunkett, Rt. Hon. H. C.
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Renshaw, Charles Bine
 Richards, Henry Charles
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. White

Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. T.
 Roberts, John H. (Dentighs.)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Round, James
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarsh.)
 Smith, James P. (Lanarksh.)
 Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset)
 Steadman, William Charles
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxford Univ.)
 Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Ure, Alexander
 Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
 Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson, Fredk. W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
 Wyndham, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
 Ambrose, Robert
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Crilly, Daniel
 Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
 Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
 Doogan, P. C.
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Hogan, James Francis

Kilbride, Denis
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
 Macaleese, Daniel
 MacDonnell, Dr. MA (Queen's C)
 M'Dermott, Patrick
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Malley, William
 Power, Patrick Joseph

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Redmond, William (Clare)
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Captain Donelan and Mr.
 Patrick O'Brien.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

CENSUS (GREAT BRITAIN) BILL.

Order for Committee read.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.)
 said his object in submitting the Instruction
 standing on the Paper in his name was to
 get separate Bills for England and Scot-
 land as was the case in previous censuses.
 He understood from what the President
 of the Local Government Board told him
 recently that the proposal to include both
 countries in one Bill was to save time,
 while the Lord Advocate, speaking subse-

quently in the debate, threw over the
 President of the Local Government
 Board, and said he was not at all going
 to rely on the question of saving time,
 and it was because of the observations
 made by the hon. and learned member
 on that occasion that he now brought
 forward this motion with the view of
 inducing the Government to pass separate
 Acts for Scotland and England. The
 Lord Advocate the other day asserted
 that this was not a retrograde, but a for-
 ward movement as far as legislation was
 concerned, and that the Government con-
 sidered it the better method of procedure.

He entirely joined issue with the Lord Advocate with respect to that contention. The hon. and learned Gentleman was of opinion that, wherever possible, legislation should be uniform for the three kingdoms. He perfectly agreed that was the case where Parliament was legislating on new subjects, as for instance in connection with commercial legislation, but in the matter of the census, they were not legislating on a new subject. During the whole century every ten years when there had been a census separate Acts had been passed for England, Scotland, and Ireland. As he read the Bill now before the House it did not in any way assimilate the census of Scotland to that of England, and one of the objections to this method of legislation was that it would require a very practised lawyer to understand the full effect of the Bill.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (Dr. TANNER, Cork County, Mid). House counted, and, forty Members being found present,

MR. BUCHANAN (continuing) said he did not see the advantage to be gained from the form of legislation that was being adopted here. The Lord Advocate had said this was the right method of legislation for Scotland, and that the Act could be made to apply to this country by an interpretation clause. He entirely contested that principle. In Scotland they had been long-suffering during the past few years with respect to this method of legislation. Two years ago the Government introduced the Teachers' Pension Bill for England, and a clause was introduced to make it apply to Scotland. Down to that time the educational legislation for Scotland

had been distinct from that of England. If it was intended to have separate census for England and Scotland the proper method to carry that out would be to have separate Acts in England and Scotland. He thought that the tendency of the present Bill was to complicate and obscure Scotch legislation and make it more difficult to understand.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to divide the Bill into two Bills, one extending to England and the other extending to Scotland." —(Mr. Buchanan.)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I hope I may be able to dispel the doubts of the hon. Gentleman. I distinctly said on the Second Reading of the Bill that this was included at the request of the Scotch Office, and in order to save time, as it was feared that there might not be much opportunity for legislation this session. The hon. Member complains of the Bill because he says it is beyond the ordinary intelligence of the people who, generally speaking, have to deal with it. To the person of ordinary intelligence "Great Britain" includes Scotland. All the provisions relating to Scotland appear in the different clauses until you come to the particular clause which makes it directly apply to Scotland, and provides machinery for that purpose under the Bill as it stands, the coming census for Scotland will be as full and complete as any former census.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 52; Noes, 125. (Division List No. 69.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)	Donelan, Captain A.	Maddison, Fred.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)	Doogan, P. C.	Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Ashton, Thomas Gair	Duckworth, James	Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)	Evans, Sir F. H. (Southampton)	O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Barlow, John Emmott	Fenwick, Charles	O'Malley, William
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)	Flavin, Michael Joseph	Power, Patrick Joseph
Billson, Alfred	Goddard, Daniel Ford	Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Broadhurst, Henry	Gurdon Sir William Brampton	Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson	Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.	Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Burns, John	Hogan, James Francis	Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Burt, Thomas	Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)	Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
Cameron, Robert (Durham)	Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)	Souttar, Robinson
Channing, Francis Allston	Macaleese, Daniel	Steadman, William Charles
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)	McCrae, George	Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Dewar, Arthur	McLaren, Charles Benjamin	Tanner, Charles Kearns

Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Ure, Alexander
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer

Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, Jos. H. (Middlesbrough)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Buchanan and Mr.
Caldwell

NOES.

Allhuser, Augustus Henry E.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarras, Lord
Barner, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis, Fienes Stanley W.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir W. Theodore
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firlank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Galloway, William Johnson

Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb.)
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hantbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Howell, William Tudor
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kewick, William
Lafone, Alfred
Lawson, John Grant (Yorksh.)
Lecky, Rt. Hon. Wm. Edw. H.
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverp'l)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowler, John
Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
McArthur, Charles (Liverp'l)
McIver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
McKillop, James
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Middlemore, Jn. Threemorton
Menceton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Penn, John

Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Rich. (Lancs Newt'n)
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Rt. Hn. Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pusvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. White-
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, James
Russell, T. W. (Tyrona)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarksh.)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Chas. Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Triton, Charles Ernest
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welly, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Tan'n)
Whiteley, H. (Asht'n-under-L.)
Williams, Jos. Powell (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland,
Penrith) in the Chair.]

*THE CHAIRMAN: The Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wigan is not in order. It is beyond the scope of the Bill.

SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan): That applies to the whole of my Amendments.

MR. BUCHANAN said he understood from the President of the Local Government Board that, although the Bill as it

stood only provided for one census, there would be a separate census for England and Scotland. That being so he; was unable to see why the Committee should not accept the Amendment he proposed. He merely desired to make that point clear.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) pointed out that Great Britain included Ireland, and if only one census was to be taken Ireland ought to come within the scope of the Bill. But in the case of Ireland there was a separate Bill. The difference in the present case was that the census in England would be taken under one Local Government Board, and that of Scotland under another. Under the circumstances he deprecated any alteration in

the procedure of the past when separate Bills were introduced for England and Scotland.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether he would give an assurance that under the Bill the Government would not alter the method that was previously adopted for taking the census in Scotland.

MR. CHAPLIN: Certainly the most unqualified assurance in the world.

Clause 1 :—

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS move^d that the census should be taken on Saturday, 30th March, and not on Sunday, 31st March, as provided in the Bill. He drew attention to the fact that when he raised this point on a previous occasion, the President of the Local Government Board stated that Sunday was taken because it was the most convenient date to take the census, as on that day it was most likely the greater number of people would be at home. The change of date would not cause any inconvenience. His Amendment was based on the ground of sentiment, which was deeply implanted in the people. There were many people, especially in the part of the country with which he was acquainted, who thought it was inappropriate to fill up these returns upon the Sunday.

Amendment proposed—

"On page 1, line 7, to leave out 'Sunday,' and insert 'Saturday.'"—(Mr. Herbert Roberts.)

MR. CHAPLIN: The first Sunday in April, 1901, happens to be Easter Sunday, and that being so it might possibly be that a great number of people might be away from home. But with regard to the Sunday, that date was chosen because the assumption was, taking the majority of people in Great Britain, it would be found that the one day on which they were at home was Sunday. The papers could be filled up on the Saturday or the Monday. Sunday has always been the day on which the census is taken, and I cannot see that any reason has been advanced for altering it.

MR. LOWLES (Shoreditch, Haggerston) appealed to the President of the

Local Government Board to alter the day from Sunday to Thursday. The census was taken on the number of people sleeping in the house on a certain night, and the practice of the week-end out of town was greatly on the increase. He made the request on behalf of a large body of men living in the central districts of London who were in the habit of spending the week-end away from home.

MR. CHAPLIN: I can quite understand that the appeal made by my hon. friend might have some weight at certain times of the year. I have very little doubt that there is a great deal of force in his argument, but I can hardly believe that it has much weight in the month of March. The Committee must remember that the census is not only for central London. It is for the whole of Great Britain, and I have heard nothing to lead me to change my opinion as to the appropriateness of the date in the Bill.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS said the difficulty to which he had drawn attention would be removed if instructions were given in the papers. The papers should not be collected earlier than mid-day on the Monday, so that those who did not care to fill up the papers on Sunday could do so on the Monday.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said it was perfectly obvious that the paper could not be filled up on the Sunday, because it would not be a true account of the people who slept in the house on the Sunday night. It would have to be filled up on Monday morning, in any case.

MR. CHAPLIN said he could not pledge himself to the particular hour at which the papers should be collected, but he would take care that the papers should be collected at such a time as would give the people an opportunity of filling them up on the Monday morning.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3 :—

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich), in moving to insert words providing for the

taking returns of the religious professions of the people, said: I think this is a perfectly reasonable matter to bring before the House. I believe that in almost every other country a religious census is taken, and in Ireland, for some reason which I have never understood, a different custom prevails there than in England, for a religious census is actually taken in Ireland. Although I do not intend to press the matter to a division, I think the subject is one which should be brought before the Committee. We are told sometimes, and may be told to-night, that a religious census is an inquisitorial proceeding. I would point out that a religious census is taken in Ireland, and why should it be regarded as inquisitorial in England? Sometimes we are told that there are Nonconformists who have had the greatest possible dislike to letting it be known what their religious belief is. That seems to me to be a very striking circumstance. I understand that all communications made to enumerators are confidential, and I can hardly conceive that there are any Nonconformists who would not desire to call themselves such to any enumerator, and to show in an unmistakable form what their religious belief was. We are told that a Nonconformist does not like to incur the social penalties which would fall upon him by declaring his religious belief. He has a motive for not desiring to declare his religious belief, and this motive, singularly enough, does not allow him to declare his religious belief in any other way. If it did, there would be no reason why he should not declare it to an enumerator. Why does this singular motive operate against enumerators, and why is this the one occasion on which he refuses to declare his belief? I am a bit sceptical about this, and I am inclined to believe that the majority of Nonconformists would have no reluctance at all to state their religious belief. In itself the matter is not ecclesiastical, but the subject has been given a peculiar interest, not by Churchmen, but by those who advocate disestablishment. It has been said that the Church should be disestablished because it no longer represents a majority of the people of this country. This has been said in England, and I believe it has also been said in Scotland. Of course, we should not admit that disestablishment was just, but we have said that the Church of England contains a great majority of the people of England

Lord Hugh Cecil.

and Wales, and that it is an increasing majority. That, I know, is sometimes disputed; but, if my statement is disputed, the proper way of settling the question is to have a religious census, and therefore we consider it our duty to demand a religious census as a reply to that argument. Of course, if there is any great objection to this Amendment I shall not press it, because disestablishment is so unlikely to arise within the next ten years that it is unnecessary to produce arguments against it. Having regard to the weakness of disestablishment, and to the fact that it is undesirable to do anything which may be deemed offensive to any part of the country, I shall not press the Amendment to a division. I only move it to show that it is not the Church of England which shrinks from this, but it is the Liberationists who shrink from the ordeal, and I wish all the world may know that we are prepared to go to the test and that our opponents are not.

MR. BUCHANAN: The noble Lord moves an Amendment, and when he introduces it he says he is not going to press it to a division. It is, therefore, a bogus Amendment, and the noble Lord knows it.

LORD HUGH CECIL: I do not press it, having regard to the feelings of my opponents.

MR. BUCHANAN: What kind of feelings? I say this motion is a reflection upon that charity which ought to be dear to the noble Lord. He has pictured before this House an imaginary Nonconformist who declined to own to the census enumerator what his religious belief was, because it might bring him down a little in society.

LORD HUGH CECIL: No, no. The whole point of my observation was to throw ridicule on that argument.

MR. BUCHANAN: Why do you take up an imaginary Nonconformist who holds a religious belief different from your own, and then exhibit him to ridicule?

LORD HUGH CECIL: I did not do so.

MR. BUCHANAN: Such an accusation is quite unworthy of the noble Lord.

LORD HUGH CECIL: The hon. Member has failed to understand the whole course of my argument.

MR. BUCHANAN: Why do you create this imaginary person and trot him out on an imaginary Amendment which you have not the courage to press to a division? The noble Lord is making use of this occasion to throw reflections, and most unworthy reflections, upon a large proportion of the people of this country, and he is doing so in the narrowest spirit. I have no sympathy whatever with these imaginary persons who loom so largely in the narrow imagination of the noble Lord, who decline to own when it is necessary to own their religious convictions. What right has the noble Lord or any individual to ask me my religious belief?

LORD HUGH CECIL: What right have you to ask the people of Ireland?

MR. BUCHANAN: At present we are discussing the Bill before us, and I am perfectly ready to discuss the Irish Bill when it arises. The noble Lord has come here suggesting an Amendment, but not daring to move it.

LORD HUGH CECIL: I have moved it.

MR. BUCHANAN: But the noble Lord says he is not going to press it to a division, and he followed that statement with a speech in which he held up to ridicule some persons in whom he did not believe. He made some observations upon Disestablishment which I thought were hardly germane to the Bill we are now discussing. I think that it is hardly worthy of the noble Lord or the Church to which he belongs to take an opportunity under a Bill of this kind to make a covert and unworthy attack upon a large number of his fellow subjects in this country.

MR. CHAPLIN: I have listened to the speech of the noble Lord, and I think he expressed his views very temperately. I fail to see what he has said to call forth the heated remarks of the hon. Member

who has just sat down. The noble Lord has stated very distinctly that he does not intend to press this Amendment to a division, and he has no object further than that of having his proposal discussed. If I might make a suggestion it would be that the Committee should accept what the noble Lord has said, and that he should be allowed to withdraw the Amendment. The fact that this proposal has called forth such heat is the best practical argument against inserting religious questions in the census.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I must say that I agree what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I do not know whether the noble Lord is now entirely satisfied with his incursion in this debate. If he is I should think he stands alone in that satisfaction. I do not know whether he is satisfied with the answer given by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. The noble Lord speaks for the Church of England.

LORD HUGH CECIL: No, I am speaking for myself.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The noble Lord was advancing arguments in favour of the Church of England as a religious establishment, and refuting arguments which he put into the minds of hon. Members opposite. He has now disclaimed any right to speak for the Church of England. The question of disestablishment is not a religious question, and it is not even an ecclesiastical question, but it is a political question. It is a question in which the members of the Church of England are as free to vote for or against as any Member of this House. I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill that this Amendment has perhaps imported more heat than its importance deserves.

*MR. TALBOT said that twenty years ago he had the honour of supporting the First Lord of the Treasury, who was then a private Member of the House, and who then took the same view. Looked at from an abstract point of view, there was nothing to be said against a religious census at that time, and he still adhered to that position. His ideas of logic were, perhaps, old-fashioned, but he could not

understand why they should not have a religious census in England when such a census was taken in Ireland, not a country certainly of weak religious feeling, whilst even their self-governing colonies had a religious census, and they could not be called retrograde communities. He thought that whatever was done in the colonies in this matter might at least be done in Great Britain. If we might not speak of an imaginary Nonconformist, then there must be a substantial one. The Church of England claimed that they had a majority of the people in their Church, and they did not object to a religious census. He could not understand what was the reason why Nonconformists did not like to have a religious census. If it was not a social reason, what was it? Were they afraid of the facts? He thought he was almost justified in saying that the British Isles were the only civilised country in which there was not a religious census.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: And in which there is an Established Church.

*MR. TALBOT: Where there was an Established Church was it a wrong thing for that Church to ask for an enumeration of the persons who belonged to it?

MR. WILLIAM JONES (Carnarvonshire, N.): The right hon. Gentleman has stated that a religious census is obtained in Ireland and the colonies, but he forgot to mention the important fact that in Ireland and the colonies there exists no Established Church. I desire to point out that Nonconformists are not afraid of the facts, but what they contend is that the real facts cannot be obtained by a religious census. I am going to challenge the noble Lord as to the facts, and I ask him, would he be willing to take a census of the *bonâ fide* members or communicants of the Church of England and Nonconformist bodies? Will he take the Church year-books and compare their number with that of the communicants and members in the Free Churches of England and Wales? That would be a fairer and a more straightforward test of the numerical strength of church and chapel than the one proposed. I heard the noble Lord cast a reflection upon Nonconformists regarding Disestablishment, but

Mr. Talbot.

the Nonconformists do not base their objection to the Establishment upon its numerical strength. Their objection is that the relation of the State to the Church has vulgarised and materialised the Church, and has not given it the power to purify and ennoble the State. If the noble Lord opposite would take a census of the communicants and members, the Free Churches would not be afraid of that. But what has the Church of England hitherto done? Various Churchmen have taken a religious census here and there, and paraded the figures to the disadvantage of Nonconformists. In this census they have included prisoners in gaols, a majority of the inmates of work-houses, demoralised paupers and degenerates, who neither properly belonged to church nor chapel, and yet they were returned as Churchmen. Such a census will be opposed by every fair-minded Gentleman in this House, because it is a hollow thing and a sham.

*MR. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.): I am perhaps one of the few Members of this House who steadily read Nonconformist literature and articles, and I may inform the hon. Member who has just spoken that since 1851 our Nonconformist fellow citizens have, from time to time, endeavoured to take what they call a religious census. The census taken in 1851 by Mr. Horace Mann was an attempt to show what is the accommodation in mission rooms not connected with the Established Church. I have not a word to say against any efforts my hon. friend takes in that direction, but it is very hard, when we want to know the number of members in the Church of England, that we cannot have a religious census. I challenge hon. Members opposite to deny that in all the self-governing colonies a religious census is taken every five or ten years without the slightest objection. The remarks of the last speaker are altogether beside the question. He knows as well as I do that in Scotland there is a position quite different from that of communicant—the position of whether a man is an adherent of the Established, the Free, or the United Presbyterian Church. The proposition put forward to-night that none but communicants should be reckoned is a most extraordinary one. I have often heard it put forward by those who share my views, but never before

from the other side of the House. What we have been told in the organs of the Liberation Society is the provision the Free Churches of England make for the worshipping public, and year 'by year they have printed in their handbooks not the number of communicants, not the number of attendants, but the number of places they provide. They appeal to that as a proof that the Established Church is not meeting the wants of the country. In 1850 they took the first step in endeavouring to get a census of those attending church and chapel. We have from time to time been favoured with what is called a religious census in large towns of the number of persons present at the morning and evening services in the Established Church, and in what are called the Free Churches. I would not vote for any proposition which would cast any slur upon my Nonconformist friends, some of whom are my best supporters. But if my noble friend goes to a division I am quite prepared to tell with him. We want it to go forth to the country that now there is an opportunity of knowing in England and Wales what we know in Ireland—the religious aspect of the country. Instead of having these bogus censuses provided by amateur reporters there is now an opportunity, if the President of the Local Government Board can see his way to do this, of knowing once and for all whether the Church of England is in a minority in this country.

MR. CHAPLIN: I have already made one appeal to the Committee, and I must apologise for appealing again. Do let me remind hon. Members of what is the position. An Amendment has been moved in regard to which it is stated by the mover that it is not proposed to take a division. That Amendment has led to a somewhat heated discussion, and I would suggest that it should now be withdrawn, in order that we may proceed with business. I do again suggest that the discussion in which we are now engaged, although keenly interesting to some Members, is really a waste of time. Therefore I hope the Amendment will be withdrawn and business proceeded with.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: While I have the greatest sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman, and believe that he wishes to proceed with business, we are

in the position that the noble Lord has commenced what I may call a sham fight, and a good many arguments have been put forward which are entirely unsound, and an opportunity should be allowed for those arguments to be answered. A great deal has been said about the different treatment meted out to Ireland; the colonies have also been referred to; and we have been urged to consent to a census in order that the facts might be laid before the country. No one wants anything but the facts, but we know, as a matter of fact, that while there is a political question pending you cannot have the facts brought out in a census of religious beliefs. ["Why not?"] The position of the Church of England and of the Church of Scotland is not the position of other churches in those countries. Before you can obtain an impartial census of the people belonging to the different churches and the different beliefs you must put those churches and beliefs on an equal and the same footing. Facts are worth nothing unless that preliminary step is taken. I, therefore, deprecate this discussion, which is calculated only to mislead public opinion.

MR. SOUTTAR (Dumfriesshire): I wish to express my astonishment at what I may call the noble Lord's want of knowledge of the heart of the Nonconformist. There is no such Nonconformist in the world as the one conjured up by the mover of this Amendment. No Nonconformist in the concrete is ashamed of his convictions, or afraid to put them on a census paper. Why, then, do they object to the taking of a religious census? Because such a census would be entirely fallacious. I have been engaged for a good many years in working amongst poor people, and I know of a certainty that no matter how poor a man is, and no matter how bad a man may be, he is always, speaking generally, a loyal Churchman. Men who have betrayed every friend who ever trusted in them, men who are drunk every day of their lives—the worse they are the more loyal to the Church. I have visited houses with a clergyman of the Church of England, and we have said to a man, "You go to chapel, I suppose?" "No, I was never in a chapel in my life." "Were you ever in a church?" I have asked. "Well, no, I cannot say that I was," has been the reply. But on a

census paper such a man would put himself down as a Churchman. Every tramp in a thieves' kitchen, every convict in the prisons, would write himself down as a Churchman, and the result is that a census return would be absolutely fallacious and entirely unfair to Nonconformists.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): It is quite true the noble Lord does not propose to go to a division, and that is the only reason I intervene in this debate. The only object of such a debate is to enable the noble Lord and his friends to say, "We offered to have a religious census, but you refused." It is not really intended that this Amendment should be carried. ["Yes."] Very well, in that case we have got to contest it, and the matter should be fully and fairly discussed. A proposition similar to this was made when the last Census Bill was before the House, but it was not carried. The object then was merely that which I have stated. No one knows better than the noble Lord himself that such a test would be perfectly fallacious. But there is a test. Take London, for instance. It is a well-known fact that if every church and chapel was crowded every Sunday there would not be one-fifth of the population in attendance. If the right hon. Gentleman likes I will say that one-half of the people of London do not attend the churches. What becomes of the other half? As far as that half are concerned, from the cradle to the grave they never go inside a church or chapel. They are not Churchmen or religious people at all. But if there was a census they would return themselves possibly as Nonconformists, but more probably as Churchmen. Would that be a fair test? I ask any real and sincere Churchman, such as we all recognise the noble Lord to be, would he regard a person who had never been inside a church, or who for ten years had not attended when he might have done, as a Churchman? Would it be an honest return on the part of that man? In Nonconformist churches we have a test. If a person does not attend for a certain space of time, unless there is some valid reason for his absence, he is struck off the rolls and is no longer regarded as a member of that church. That is a real test, and one which can be applied to any community. If you have a census at all you want an

Mr. Souttar.

honest census. Look at the census returns for prisons. Take Wales. A vast majority of the persons in prisons in Wales, which is a Nonconformist country, return themselves as Churchmen. I am not going to suggest that this is because Churchmen are the scum of the population in Wales. What I suggest is that these people are people of no religion at all. The residue—I will not say the residuum—of the population will always label themselves of the religion of the bulk of the population—the State religion. The same thing applies to workhouses, and, I believe, to lunatic asylums. Would the noble Lord say that because these returns show a larger proportion of Churchmen that therefore the majority of lunatics are Churchmen, or the majority of Churchmen are lunatics? I venture to say that the object of the Amendment is really not worthy of the noble Lord. He wants an honest return; he really wants to know officially what is the real strength of Nonconformity and of the Church in this country, and if there was a means of arriving at it I quite agree with him it would be exceedingly desirable to get it. In the Disestablishment controversy we have had statistics given on either side, but there has been no means of testing them. The time will come when the Disestablishment issue will again be a vital one, as when this war craze has passed away the people of the country will return to deeper issues. It is, therefore, important to have reliable figures. The only way of getting them would be to get the denominations to return a register of their own members, and those figures could be tested. Churchmen give us an aggregate number, but when we ask for the figures for any single parish they decline to give them. That is the real test. If the noble lord can suggest any means of arriving at the facts, by which the return should be a fair, honest and reliable one, I will heartily support it, and I believe the bulk of Nonconformists would do the same.

LORD HUGH CECIL (who was indistinctly heard) was understood to say that he did not intend to reflect injuriously upon the religious convictions of anybody. He had a sincere respect for all religious people. A religious census was not asked for for the purpose of estimating the religious force of the various denominations in the country. Such statistics would neces-

sarily be inaccurate and misleading. The census was desired for the specific purpose of meeting the numerical argument against the Establishment. This was not a bogus Amendment; it was a *bona fide* offer, and he was quite ready to go to a division. On its merits it was a reasonable proposal. It was not so much out of consideration for the feeling of hon. Members on the other side of the House as out of consideration for the feelings of Nonconformists as a body that they did not wish to do a gratuitously aggressive thing by forcing this proposal upon them by a division. He therefore asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment put, and negatived.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4 :—

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he wished to move the omission in Section (d), Clause 4, page 2, line 5, the words "in the case of Wales or the County of Monmouth." He wanted to extend that schedule to the whole country. There was a very large Welsh population in England, and if his amendment were adopted it simply meant that a language column would be added to all the English as well as Welsh papers. This suggestion was made at the last census, but too late, and there was a promise that it would be considered when the next census came round. If it were found on report that

it would be impossible to carry out his suggestion, the clause could be restored as it now stood.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 5, to leave out the words 'in the case of Wales or the County of Monmouth.'"—(Mr. Lloyd-George.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. CHAPLIN said he did not think the hon. Member quite appreciated the enormous additional labour that would be caused by his proposal, and there was no reason why that additional labour should be imposed on the enumerators.

MR. LOUGH hoped that the suggestion would be further considered. There were thirty-five churches in London in which Welsh was spoken, and quite as many in Liverpool and Manchester; and such a return would give a great deal of interesting information.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS hoped the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider the point, because as time went on there would be a gradually increasing number of Welsh-speaking people in England.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 164 ; Noes, 54. (Division List No. 70.)

AYES.

Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.	Chamberlain, J. A. (Worcest'r)	Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E.
Allsopp, Hon. George	Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry	Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manch'r)
Archdale, Edward Mervyn	Charrington, Spencer	Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Arnold, Alfred	Clare, Octavius Leigh	Finch, George H.
Ashton, Thomas Gair	Coghill, Douglas Harry	Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John	Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse	Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Balcarres, Lord	Colomb, Sir John C. Ready	Fisher, William Hayes
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)	Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)	Fison, Frederick William
Banbury, Frederick George	Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasg'v)	Fletcher, Sir Henry
Bartley, George C. T.	Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.	Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)	Cotton-Jodrell, Col. E. T. D.	Fry, Lewis
Beckett, Ernest William	Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge	Galloway, W. Johnson
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe	Cubitt, Hon. Henry	Garrit, William
Bill, Charles	Curzon, Viscount	Gedge, Sydney
Blundell, Colonel Henry	Dalrymple, Sir Charles	Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Bond, Edward	Denny, Colonel	Gilliat, John Saunders
Brassey, Albert	Dickinson, Robert Edmond	Godson, Sir A. Frederick
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John	Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles	Goldsworthy, Major-General
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson	Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon	Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Bullard, Sir Harry	Dorington, Sir John Edward	Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Butcher, John George	Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-	Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-	Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)	Goulding, Edward Alfred
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derby-sh.)	Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore	Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William	Faber, George Denison	Gurdon, Sir William Bampton
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)	Fardell, Sir T. George	Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Ld. George

census paper such a man would put himself down as a Churchman. Every tramp in a thieves' kitchen, every convict in the prisons, would write himself down as a Churchman, and the result is that a census return would be absolutely fallacious and entirely unfair to Nonconformists.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): It is quite true the noble Lord does not propose to go to a division, and that is the only reason I intervene in this debate. The only object of such a debate is to enable the noble Lord and his friends to say, "We offered to have a religious census, but you refused." It is not really intended that this Amendment should be carried. ["Yes."] Very well, in that case we have got to contest it, and the matter should be fully and fairly discussed. A proposition similar to this was made when the last Census Bill was before the House, but it was not carried. The object then was merely that which I have stated. No one knows better than the noble Lord himself that such a test would be perfectly fallacious. But there is a test. Take London, for instance. It is a well-known fact that if every church and chapel was crowded every Sunday there would not be one-fifth of the population in attendance. If the right hon. Gentleman likes I will say that one-half of the people of London do not attend the churches. What becomes of the other half? As far as that half are concerned, from the cradle to the grave they never go inside a church or chapel. They are not Churchmen or religious people at all. But if there was a census they would return themselves possibly as Nonconformists, but more probably as Churchmen. Would that be a fair test? I ask any real and sincere Churchman such as we all recognise the noble Lord to be, would he regard a person who has never been inside a church, or who ten years had not attended church, might have done, as a Churchman? Would it be an honest return? Would it be an honest return? That part of that man? In No. 1 churches we have a test. A man who does not attend for a certain time, unless there is some valid excuse, his absence, he is struck off the list. He is no longer regarded as a member of the church. That is a real test which can be applied to the whole of the country. If you have a census

Mr. Soultar.

honest census. Look at the returns for prisons. The vast majority of the persons in Wales, which is a Nonconformist country, return themselves as Churchmen. I am not going to suggest that Churchmen are the majority in Wales. What these people are per-

all. The residue of the residuum—of the label themselves the bulk of the population. The same thing and, I believe, the noble Lord returns show Churchmen of lunatics. I venture to say that the Amendment of the noble Lord he really the real test of the Bill was agreed to by a majority of the House. I venture to say that the Amendment of the noble Lord he really the real test of the Bill was agreed to by a majority of the House. I venture to say that the Amendment of the noble Lord he really the real test of the Bill was agreed to by a majority of the House.

put, "That the clause as part of the Bill."

Committee divided:—Ayes, 155; Noes, 147. (Division List No. 71.)

T. D. Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Green, Walford D. (Wendbury)
Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Howell, William Tudor
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessell, Captain H. Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kenyon, James
Kimber, Henry
Lafone, Alfred
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn)
Lawson, John Grant (York)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William

Newton	Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Thurston	Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G. (Oxford Univ.)
Thurston, Percy M.	
Thurston, Wm. Edw. Murray	
Warr, Augustus Frederick	
Webster, Sir Richard E.	
Welby, Lieut.-Colonel A. C. E.	
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)	
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon	
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)	
Whitmore, Charles Algernon	
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)	
Williams, Josph. Powell (Birm.)	
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord	
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)	
Wilson, John (Falkirk)	
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)	
Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)	
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart	
Wyndham, George	
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—	
Sir William Walrond and	
Mr. Anstruther.	

NOES.

Fenwick, Charles	Redmond, J. E. (Waterford)
Flavin, Michael Joseph	Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford	Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale	Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Jones, William (Cardiff)	Robson, William Snowdon
Kilbride, Denis	Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumbria)	Souttar, Robinson
Lloyd-George, David	Steelman, William Charles
Macaleese, Daniel	Sullivan, Donald (Westmeath)
Maddison, Fred.	Tanner, Charles Kearns
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)	Thomas, D. A. (Merthyr)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William	Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Nussey, Thomas Willans	Ure, Alexander
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)	TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)	Mr. McKenna and Mr.
Randell, David	Courtenay Warner.
Reckitt, Harold James	

Clause 2 agreed to.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. W. WHITE RIDLEY) moved a new clause with reference to the duration of the Act. It declares that the measure shall be temporary and applicable to the present war only.

New clause added :—

"3. This Act shall apply only to absence during the continuance of the present war in South Africa."

Bill reported, as amended; to be considered upon Monday next.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

ARMY (EXCESSES), 1898-99.

£100, Army Excesses.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) asked the Financial Secretary to give some little explanation with regard to this excess Vote.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): In point of fact, as the hon. Member will see from the statement on the Vote, there is an excess in the appropriation to-day

Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W.
 Heath, James
 Helder, Augustus
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Kenyon, James
 Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
 Kimber, Henry
 Lafone, Alfred
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. William E. H.
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
 Lonsdale, John Brownlee
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdona, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 McArthur, Wm. (Cornwall)
 McIver, Sir Lewis (Edin'gh W.)
 McKillop, James

Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
 Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monk, Charles James
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Morgan, Hn. Fred. Monmouthsh.
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Muntz, Philip A.
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bate)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pilkington, Rich. (Lanes N'wt'n
 Platt-diggins, Frederick
 Plunkett, Rt. Hn. H. Curzon
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Rachel, Major Frederic Carne
 Richards, Henry Charles
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Round, James
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)

Rutherford, John
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Simeon, Sir Harrington
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Ox. Univ.
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Wm. E. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunt'n
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Williams, Joseph P. (Birm.)
 Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
 Abraham, William (Rhonda)
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Billson, Alfred
 Bolton, Thomas Dolling
 Broadhurst, Henry
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burns, John
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Robert (Durham)
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Duckworth, James
 Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
 Farquharson, Dr. Robert
 Fenwick, Charles
 Flavin, Michael Joseph

Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Kilbride, Denis
 Lawson, Sir W. (Cumb'land)
 Lough, Thomas
 Macaleese, Daniel
 McCrae, George
 McKenna, Reginald
 Maddison, Fred.
 Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Malley, William
 Pease, Jos. A. (Northumb.)
 Pickersgill, Edward Hare
 Price, Robert John
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
 Redmond, William (Clare)

Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Roberts, J. H. (Denbighsh.)
 Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarsh.)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Souttar, Robinson
 Steadman, William Charles
 Strachey, Edward
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearnes
 Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David Alfred (Merth'r
 Ure, Alexander
 Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Yoxall, James Henry
 TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Lloyd-George and Mr.
 William Jones.

MR. LOWLES wished to draw attention to section 4 of Clause 4 in reference to tenements and dwelling-houses. He knew of a case where 350 different flats were recorded by the Registrar General as seven inhabited houses. That materially affected the grants under the Equalisation of Rates Act. Every separate tenement should be returned as a definite dwelling-house in that schedule rather than the blocks.

MR. BUCHANAN said that one of the difficulties about applying this Bill to Scotland was that in Scotland a tenement was a whole block of buildings, and in

England it was each individual house or suite of apartments in a block; and when they went to the interpretation clause they found no definition of a house or tenement. There was, therefore, ambiguity as to how this particular sub-section was to apply to Scotland at all. Formally he moved to omit sub-section 4.

Amendment proposed --

"On page 2, line 23, to leave out sub-section 4."—(Mr. Buchanan.)

Question proposed, "That sub-section 4 stand part of the clause."

MR. CHAPLIN said that sub-section 4 applied to Scotland in precisely the same way as in England. It said that—

"Where a dwelling-house is let or sub-let in different tenements or apartments, and occupied distinctly by different persons or families, a separate schedule shall be left with or for and shall be filled up by the occupier of each such distinct tenement or apartment."

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 5:—

SIR T. G. FARDELL (Paddington, S.) moved to insert in page 3, line 5, after the word "parishes," the word "wards." It would, he contended, be far more satisfactory for health purposes, especially in boroughs, if the particulars were furnished by wards rather than by parishes. He understood that instructions were to be given to the enumerators to take the particulars by wards instead of by parishes if necessary, but no harm whatever would be done if that were put in the Bill.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 5, after the word 'parishes' to insert the word 'wards.'"—(Sir T. G. FardeLL.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'wards' be there inserted."

MR. CHAPLIN said he would be very glad to accept the Amendment if he thought it was necessary, but that was not the case. The word "ward" was not in the old Act, but under Clause 10 power was given to enable the authorities to prescribe that the census should be taken by wards, and that was what was done in all boroughs. The Government would see that that was also done on this occasion by instruction.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 6, 7, and 8 agreed to.

Clause 9:—

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS moved in page 3, line 33, to leave out "may, if he thinks fit," and insert "shall." The meaning of his Amendment was that at

the request and cost of any county council, borough, or urban district council abstracts containing any useful information in the census returns with respect to that county, borough, or district council should be supplied by the Registrar General on demand. He could see no reason why this important information should be kept at the discretion of the Registrar General.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 33, to leave out 'may, if he thinks fit,' in order to insert the word 'shall.'"—(Mr. Herbert Roberts.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. CHAPLIN could not accept an Amendment which would make it compulsory on the Registrar General to furnish these returns. There would be no unwillingness whatever to grant any reasonable information; but some discretion should be left to the Registrar General, for otherwise demands might be made upon him which would be quite unreasonable.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS said that although he himself thought it would be better if the power were not left in the hands of the Registrar General absolutely; still he assumed that the Local Government Board would see that the local authorities were considered, and on that assurance he would withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clauses 9, 10, and 11 agreed to.

Clause 12:—

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR asked why in the application of the Bill to Scotland, "Secretary for Scotland" should be substituted for "Local Government Board."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Bute-shire): There has been no change in the policy of taking the census since the last time. As a matter of fact, from the constitution of the staff in the office, it is very much more convenient that the work should be done in the office of the Secretary for

Scotland than in the office of the Local Government Board. There is really an advantage in having it done in the former office. The office of the Secretary for Scotland is more in consonance with the office of the Local Government Board of England than is the office of the Local Government Board of Scotland.

Clauses 12 and 13 agreed to.

Committee report progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

ELECTORAL DISABILITIES (MILITARY SERVICE) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1:—

*Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) moved on behalf of his hon. friend the Member for Ayr Burghs to insert in page 1, line 8, after "required," the words "or in respect of a qualification by which he votes as a lodger." The word "lodger" was mentioned in the Act of 1891, though it was omitted from the present Bill.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 8, after 'required,' to insert the words 'or in respect of a qualification by which he votes as a lodger.'"—(*Mr. Jeffreys.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I can assure my hon. friend that these words are not necessary, and that it would be undesirable to insert them. We of course intend that this Bill shall apply to the lodger franchise, assuming the lodgings are kept on. It has been brought to my attention that in order to secure the lodger franchise under the existing law a claim must be sent in signed by the lodger. In order to meet the difficulty of the absence of the lodger, I am prepared to accept an Amendment that the lodger's declaration may be signed by the landlord. It would be more convenient to do it in that way.

Mr. A. Graham Murray.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs) asked if a lodger who left the country as a Volunteer was disqualified.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: It is absolutely necessary that he should maintain his qualification, but he will not be subject to the disadvantage attaching to more than four months absence.

*COLONEL WELBY (Taunton) asked whether special exceptions could not be made in these cases, because it was not probable that the lodgings would be kept on. He was perfectly sure that the Government had no intention that civil penalties should attach to the Volunteers, but it would be very hard if lodgers were to be disenfranchised.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he could conceive a case in which the landlord might be troublesome, and would not sign the claim.

*THE CHAIRMAN: An Amendment will, I understand, be moved, which will raise that point.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Another Amendment made.

*MR. JEFFREYS moved in page 1, line 9, after "of," to insert "the permanent department and medical staff of the Army." Many of the medical officers, although not ordered, went of their own accord to South Africa, and had rendered the very greatest service. If they were absent more than four months they would probably lose their votes, and he thought the Committee would wish them included in the Bill. For the same reason he moved that the general staff should be included. The Bill now only included Reserve Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, and he thought the permanent department and medical staff should also be included.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 9, after the word 'of,' to insert the words 'the permanent department and medical staff of the Army.'"—(*Mr. Jeffreys.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: For the reason stated by the Home Secretary on the Second Reading of this Bill, it is impossible to accept this Amendment. My hon. friend wishes that officers on the permanent staff and the medical staff as distinguished from other Army officers get the benefit of this Bill. If we assented to that we should have no answer to the requests which would be made to us on behalf of other classes of officers who have gone out in obedience to orders. We have to draw a distinction between those who by the terms of their profession are liable to foreign service and those who are not. The object of the Bill is to remove the electoral disabilities under which Reservists and Volunteers might otherwise labour owing to their absence in South Africa. I do not say it would not be possible to include certain special classes, but if we accept this Amendment we cannot resist the claims of others, and we are therefore obliged to oppose it.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) said he would appeal to the Government to include war correspondents in the Bill.

MR. MCKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) asked if war correspondents would be disqualified.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: War correspondents are not in the service of the Crown, and therefore cannot be included in the Bill.

*COLONEL WELBY said there was a very great difference between the officers that would be included by the Amendment and ordinary regimental officers. Officers on the general staff had more or less permanent appointments, and were not on the roster for foreign service, and if exceptional circumstances had not arisen they would be resident in the country now. The regimental officer, on the contrary, always went with his regiment. He hoped the Attorney General would be able to accept the Amendment.

*MR. JEFFREYS said that after the Attorney General's statement he would not press his Amendment to a division, because he had not the slightest chance of carrying it, though he thought it rather hard on the classes mentioned. He begged to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 12, after the word 'not,' to insert the words 'In the case of a person entitled to claim the lodger franchise being so absent, his claim may be signed on his behalf by his landlord.'—(Mr. Herbert Robertson.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I think it is abundantly clear that lodgers should be included in the Bill, and I propose to accept the Amendment. But the question has been raised as to whether it is advisable to insert the word "landlord." The reason suggested to me was that there could then be no doubt that the declaration would be made by a person who knew that the tenancy or lodging was still existing. I think there is no possibility of landlords being unwilling to tell the truth in the matter, and although it has been suggested that we might make the provision more elastic by saying that the declaration may be signed by some members of the family I think we had better leave it as it is. We cannot take the wife, because it is not the universal case that lodgers have wives.

MR. BARTLEY said he could give a case in his own district where he was quite sure the landlord would not sign unless the lodger was of a particular political complexion. The Amendment would give the landlord a veto on the lodger's vote, which was a great objection. He hoped the Attorney General would make the provision more elastic.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny) said they had instances in Ireland where not only the landlord but the servant girl signed, with the result that a number of babies were placed on the register, and through the instrumentality of their votes the Government obtained a seat which they otherwise would not have won. He hoped the Attorney General would deal with England and Ireland alike, and that the same privileges would be given to servant girls in England as in Ireland.

*MR. JEFFREYS asked whether the Attorney General would not insert after "landlord" the words "magistrate or minister of religion."

MR. McKENNA said that the party agents on either side would be the only persons who would care whether lodgers had votes or not. Why not let them sign the declaration?

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) did not think a registration agent more reliable than a landlord. He did without the one, and he wished he could dispense with the other.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said he should personally have no objection to a magistrate being the person authorised to sign the declaration.

Question put, and agreed to.

Another Amendment made.

MR. McKENNA moved the insertion of a clause for the purpose of satisfying the demand that Volunteers should not be disqualified by going abroad to serve the country. On the day that a Volunteer left home it might be assumed that he was in actual occupation either of a dwelling-house or lodging, but from the moment of leaving he might be regarded as having ceased occupation of the house or lodging. If he kept up occupation the Bill would give him the vote when he

returned, but if he gave up occupation he would lose his vote. The hon. Member said his Amendment was very simple in form, and merely declared that Volunteers were entitled to be deemed to have remained in occupation of such qualifying premises as they were in occupation of at the time of their departure abroad.

*THE CHAIRMAN: You cannot move this until the first clause is disposed of.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said it would probably be convenient if he now answered the hon. Member. There might be a small class, he did not admit that it was a large one, who had not got the twelve months qualification by the time they left. It was not intended to put those people on the register. What was intended was to preserve to everybody who was on the register the right to continue on the register which they would otherwise lose by going away for a longer period than four months. He could not accept the Amendment, which would make the Bill a qualifying or registration measure.

Question put, "That the clause as amended stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 155; Noes, 47. (Division List No. 71.)

AYES.

Allsopp, Hon. George	Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.	Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Archdale, Edward Mervyn	Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge	Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Arnold, Alfred	Cubitt, Hon. Henry	Green, Walford D. (Wendbury)
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.	Curzon, Viscount	Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John	Dalrymple, Sir Charles	Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Balcarres, Lord	Denny, Colonel	Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manchester)	Dickinson, Robert Edmond	Hardy, Laurence
Banbury, Frederick George	Digby, John K. D. Wingfield	Heath, James
Bartley, George C. T.	Dorington, Sir John Edward	Helder, Augustus
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)	Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers	Hickman, Sir Alfred
Beckett, Ernest William	Doxford, Sir William Theodore	Howell, William Tudor
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe	Faber, George Denison	Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice
Bethell, Commander	Fardell, Sir T. George	Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Bill, Charles	Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward	Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Blundell, Colonel Henry	Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manchester)	Jessell, Captain H. Merton
Bond, Edward	Finch, George H.	Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Brassey, Albert	Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne	Johnston, William (Belfast)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John	Firbank, Joseph Thomas	Kenyon, James
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)	Fisher, William Hayes	Kimber, Henry
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)	Fletcher, Sir Henry	Lafone, Alfred
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worcester)	Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)	Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Cornwall)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry	Fry, Lewis	Lawson, John Grant (Yorkshire)
Charrington, Spencer	Galloway, William Johnson	Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Coghill, Douglas Harry	Garfit, William	Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse	Gedge, Sydney	Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Colomb, Sir J. Charles Ready	Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)	Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)	Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.	Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)	Goldsworthy, Major-General	Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Cornwallis, Fienes Stanley W.	Gordon, Hon. John Edward	Lowe, Francis William

Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdona, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 McIver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
 McKillop, James
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
 Middlesmore, Jn. Throgmorton
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Mottagui, Hon. J. S. (Hants.)
 Morgan, Hon. F. (Monmouth)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Murtz, Philip A.
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Pease, H. Pike (Darlington)
 Penn, John
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur

Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plunkett, Rt. Hon. H. Curzon
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Price, Robert John
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Rasmah, Major Frederic Carne
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. T.
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Round, James
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks)
 Stewart, Sir M. J. McTaggart
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley

Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxford Univ.)
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lieut.-Colonel A. C. E.
 Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-La.)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Williams, Josph. Powell (Birm.)
 Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrand and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Billson, Alfred
 Bolton, Thomas Dolling
 Broadhurst, Henry
 Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burns, John
 Caldwell, James
 Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Crilly, Daniel
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Duckworth, James

Fenwick, Charles
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
 Jones, William (Carmarvonshire)
 Kilbride, Denis
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumbland)
 Lloyd-George, David
 Macaleese, Daniel
 Maddison, Fred.
 Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Randell, David
 Reckitt, Harold James

Redmond, J. E. (Waterford)
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Souttar, Robinson
 Steadman, William Charles
 Sullivan, Donald (Westmeath)
 Tanner, Charles Kearns
 Thomas, D. A. (Merthyr)
 Trevelyan, Charles Phillips
 Ure, Alexander

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. McKenna and Mr.
 Courtenay Warner.

Clause 2 agreed to.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
 THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. W.
 WHITE RIDLEY) moved a new clause
 with reference to the duration of the Act.
 It declares that the measure shall be
 temporary and applicable to the present
 war only.

New clause added:—

"3. This Act shall apply only to absence
 during the continuance of the present war in
 South Africa."

Bill reported, as amended; to be con-
 sidered upon Monday next.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

ARMY (EXCESSES), 1898-99.

£100, Army Excesses.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) asked
 the Financial Secretary to give some little
 explanation with regard to this excess
 Vote.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO
 THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-
 WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): In point
 of fact, as the hon. Member will see from
 the statement on the Vote, there is
 an excess in the appropriation to-day

more than the excess on the expenditure. The excess on the expenditure occurs from unforeseen circumstances, the first of which was that too much was calculated as coming into the account in respect of the abolition of deferred pay. On the other hand, there have been additional charges for transport which took place through the unexpected movement of troops. That accounts for a very large sum.

Resolution agreed to; to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

1. Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st day of March, 1899 and 1900, the sum of £466,770 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

2. Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, the sum of £46,156,500 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. CALDWELL called attention to the fact that this was close upon the hour for adjournment, and stated that it would not be fair to Members who had not read the Bill to proceed with the Second Reading to-night. He criticised the provisions of the Bill with respect to the tenure of office and the qualifications of sanitary inspectors, pointing out that while the men had undergone no kind of

Mr. J. Powell-Williams.

qualification they were to be practically irremovable.

It being midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday, 5th April.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Considered in Committee; Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday, 27th June.

NEW BILLS.

PETROLEUM.

Bill to amend The Petroleum Act, 1879, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ure, Mr. Joseph A. Pease, Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael, Colonel Denny, Mr. Compton Rickett, Mr. Cross, Mr. Reckitt, Mr. McKillop, Mr. Tully, Mr. John Burns, and Mr. Trevelyan.

PETROLEUM BILL.

"To amend the Petroleum Act, 1879," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 127.]

VETERINARY SURGEONS AMENDMENT.

Bill to further amend the Law relating to Veterinary Surgeons, ordered to be brought in by Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael, Dr. Farquharson, Lord Dalkeith, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Snaw-Stewart, and Mr. Charles Douglas.

VETERINARY SURGEONS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To further amend the Law relating to Surgeons," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 128.]

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 16th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

HIGHAM FERRERS WATER BILL
[H.L.].

The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

OTLEY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
WATER BILL [H.L.].

DONEGAL RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

LANCASHIRE INEBRIATES ACTS
BOARD BILL [H.L.].

Reported with Amendments.

CRYSTAL PALACE COMPANY BILL
[H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to order).

MARYPORT HARBOUR BILL [H.L.].

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES informed the House that the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Order of the Day for the Second Reading discharged. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

BOURNEMOUTH CORPORATION BILL
[H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to order).

RUGELEY GAS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TREATY SERIES, No. 6 (1900).

International Sanitary Convention, signed at Venice, 19th March, 1897 (Ratification deposited at Rome).

NAVY.

Naval Manœuvres, 1899.

TRADE REPORTS.

Miscellaneous Series: No. 523. Coal crisis in Russia.

VOL. LXXX. [FOURTH SERIES.]

BANKING AND RAILWAY STATISTICS
(IRELAND).

Report for December, 1899.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL
(RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE).

Returns of receipts and expenditure of the General Medical Council and of the Branch Councils for England, Scotland, and Ireland; also receipts and expenditure of the Dental Registration Fund; for the year ending 31st December, 1899.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 5th March, 1900, declaring that Mr. Edwin Chadwick, postmaster, Dukinfield, Post Office Department, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Orders in Council of 3rd March, 1900—

- I. Confirming certain bye-laws made by the Port Talbot Pilotage Board.
- II. Reducing the dues leviable by the Trinity House of Kingston-upon-Hull in respect of the lights in the Humber above that Port.

SPRING ASSIZES ACT, 1879.

Two Orders in Council of 3rd March, 1900, relating to Spring Assize Counties Nos. 2 and 3.

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 to 1895.

Order in Council of 3rd March, 1900, giving effect to an Extradition Treaty between Her Majesty and the Republic of San Marino.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Order in Council of 3rd March, 1900, entitled "The China and Corea (Supreme Court) Order in Council, 1900."

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899
(METROPOLITAN BOROUGHES).

Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan

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Boroughs of Camberwell and Westminster, and incorporating the Councils thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 30.)

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.]

[INTRODUCTION.]

*THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Lord BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH) : My Lords, the Bill which I desire to present to your Lordships and to ask the House to read a first time is not one of great length, but I venture to characterise it as one of considerable importance. It is somewhat complicated in its character and provisions, because it is necessary to fit the reforms which we now propose into existing statutes and into the condition of affairs as regards education in Scotland which we find in existence at the present time. I have thought it would be convenient that I should make an explanatory statement in regard to the Bill on presenting it to your Lordships, rather than wait for the second reading, and I believe that course will be convenient to all concerned. I propose, if your Lordships are good enough to give the Bill a First Reading to-night, to postpone the Second Reading stage for a considerable time, in order that full opportunity may be given for the consideration of the measure in Scotland. The Bill is one for the purpose of amending and extending the provisions of the law of Scotland on the subject of education. It is mainly concerned with higher education, and its chief purpose is to organise in one system the administration of the various funds which are now devoted to the purpose of higher education in its various branches; and also to appoint local representative bodies and give them statutory powers for the management of higher education. The Act of 1872, although it dealt mainly with elementary education, contained various clauses dealing with higher schools and higher education. It put all the burgh schools under the school boards of the places in which those schools were situated, and it made certain provisions for their maintenance and for their upkeep out of ancient endowments, a large proportion of which are known in Scotland under the name of "The Common Good." These higher schools are histori-

cally an integral part of our Scottish system of education, and the duty was laid upon school boards of maintaining them in an efficient state, and of providing them from time to time with premises suitable for carrying on their work. I am to-day in a position to say that upon the whole the powers of the school boards in this matter have been well and wisely exercised; but there have been in some quarters a tendency to grudge the expenditure necessary for the maintenance of these higher schools, which were placed at a great disadvantage compared to all other schools in Scotland in that they have never, from first to last, received any assistance from Imperial funds. There has been, as I have indicated from time to time, a feeling amongst communities—often communities of very moderate size and not very wealthy—that the maintenance of these higher schools was to some extent an undue burden upon them, inasmuch as these schools were used by, and were the means of educating a large proportion of the population who reside beyond the bounds of the communities which are rated for their support. I for one shall certainly not undervalue the work which has been done by the higher schools in Scotland, and it is a cardinal point in my policy to give them greater aid than they have yet received. There have, however, grown up beside them a number of upper departments, as they are called, of elementary schools which give a very efficient higher education. The traditions of our Scottish system of education—the traditions which gather round the parish schools of Scotland—entitle them to participate in the work of higher education. Many localities could not, and do not, maintain higher schools, but they have in large numbers managed to devote a portion of their funds to the maintenance of these higher departments, and in any scheme for the reconstitution of higher education in Scotland the interests of these upper departments must be considered and taken care of. But, my Lords, these higher departments are in a position of great advantage, in one respect, compared to the old higher schools, for they have not been excluded from participation in Imperial grants, and they have continuously, from the time of their establishment, obtained considerable amounts under the Code, although these amounts have not

been sufficient to save the locality which supports them from incurring considerable expense in their maintenance. To some extent also, in the case of the communities that maintain these higher departments, the same feeling has grown up that the particular parish in which one of these higher departments is situated is unfairly burdened in comparison with the parishes around it, because, as in the case of the burgh schools, the children of those who reside beyond the bounds of the school board district which maintains these schools come and attend them. There are thus at present two main lines of provision out of public local funds for higher education in Scotland, both of these main provisions being thoroughly contemplated by the Act of 1872 and the Amending Acts which have been passed since that time. In addition to these two classes of schools, there are a large number of endowed schools, and there are certain endowments, not attached to schools, which are distributed amongst various schools and which have had a great influence on the efficiency of higher education in Scotland. All these endowments have been reformed, and in the main have been brought into harmony with modern requirements, and I am not at all prepared to admit that the state of our system of higher education in Scotland is in the complete chaos and confusion which it pleases some people to indicate to be the case. Recently the Department for which I am responsible has reconstituted the Code under which the Imperial grants are given to Scottish education, and I think I may safely say that the principles upon which that Code was re-constituted have been met everywhere with a cordial welcome. We have, I believe, also solved, at any rate, fairly satisfactorily, the problem of the line of demarcation between elementary and secondary education, and the method of solution has been found in the merit certificate which is sought every year by increasing numbers of children, and which has, to a large extent, I am glad to say, discredited and taken the place of the labour certificate as the goal of elementary education. For both the higher schools and these higher departments we have established the leaving certificate, which is now regarded, I think, throughout Scotland as the standard of what a good secondary school ought to aim at; and the system of inspection established by the

Scotch Education Department now includes nearly all the higher schools of the country. All those which are aided by public funds are, of course, under it compulsorily, as also are many endowed schools, and some voluntary schools, which are not obliged to come under the system, have placed themselves under inspection because they have become convinced that that inspection is conducted in a manner which is for their benefit, and which is calculated to ensure the confidence of the public. In these respects, therefore, the range of the central authority for education in Scotland—namely, the Scotch Education Department—covers not only elementary education, but a very large portion of the secondary schools, and more recently we have also had placed under our charge, with, I am glad to say, good results, the grants formerly administered by the Science and Art Department at South Kensington. By these means we have made the working of the whole system more harmonious, and although I do not say we have completed our work, because I think we may possibly do more by means of amalgamating the evening schools which are conducted under the Code and those which are the recipients of the Science and Art grants, we have, I think, obtained by administration and without legislation a very fair measure of success in co-ordinating our whole system of secondary education in Scotland. The central Department has gradually, in this way, extended its influence, with the object of bringing all educational administration under one homogeneous system suitable to the needs of the country. The difficulty with which we have to deal, and the difficulty which I hope this Bill, if it meets with the sanction of Parliament, will remedy, is twofold, and it is of a very real character. In the first place, there is the absence of a permanent and local authority for the administration of higher education and the disposal of the funds which are provided by the central authority for higher education, and secondly, those funds now reach their destination through too many and too diverse channels. We look for the main initiative in all matters of education to local effort, and I venture to lay it down as a proposition which will not be controverted that if the funds devoted to education arrive at their destination through too many and

too diverse local authorities, if their application is uncertain, if they are sometimes devoted to education, given in one year and withheld in another, and, perhaps, given in part in a third, and if, above all, there is no local body to supervise and prevent waste, it is absolutely impossible to look for the best attainable results. The funds with which this Bill proposes to deal are the Local Taxation Fund of 1890, which may or may not be given to technical education, but which, as a very general rule, is devoted to technical education, and which amounts every year to between £50,000 and £60,000. The second fund with which we propose to deal under this Bill is the sum of £60,000 devoted to secondary education under the Act of 1892. I do not wish to revive the controversies which surrounded the first administration of this fund. The noble Lord opposite will remember that I carried a motion against the Government of which he was then a member, when my predecessor in office had departed from the scheme authorised by his predecessor, and to which he himself at first adhered. I regret the result of what was then done, and I venture to say that it has been a great calamity to Scotland that the sum of £60,000 should have been administered for these years upon different principles in different localities, that it should have been dealt out in homeopathic doses, that no common standard of attainments should have been required before it was expended, and that no effort to regulate any proper proportion between local and Imperial effort should have been made in regard to it. The third fund with which we propose to deal is a sum of about £35,000, which was set apart under an Act of Parliament of 1898, and which is, at present, being administered by the Department. The Minute which regulates the administration of that fund was sanctioned by Parliament last year, and we are now in process, for the first time, of arranging the distribution of that money. We have found that the claims and proposals which have been sent in to us are very diverse, that there is very little of common principle in them, and the co-ordination of all the different demands has entailed a great deal of labour upon the Department; but we hope very shortly to announce the result of the first division of this fund. I hope it will be possible to announce, at

Lord Balfour of Burleigh.

any rate, the main principle upon which it is distributed before I ask the House to take the Second Reading of this Bill. There is still another sum which is in part devoted to higher education in Scotland—a sum of £100,000, set apart under an Act of 1892, which may be applied to education or to purposes of public utility, under conditions which are laid down in that Act. The first three of these funds that I have mentioned, amounting altogether to about £150,000 a year, we propose to amalgamate and put into a Higher Education (Scotland) Fund, but we do not propose, at present, to attempt to divert the last-mentioned sum of £100,000, because it is not, as I have said, exclusively, at present, devoted to education, and there are some useful objects to which part of it, at any rate, is applied. But, if we leave it in the hands of local authorities, I hope that, should there be a demand for rating on the part of the local committees which we now establish, the local authorities at present administering this £100,000 a year will remember that they have it, and that the fact that they do receive it is a set off and compensation for a possible burden of rating. I recognise fully that every district cannot have a higher school. I will go further and say that probably within the reach of every child we cannot have a really efficient higher department; but what we hope is that the authority which we shall set up under this Bill will rule over a wider area than the parish or the burgh, and will be enabled to harmonise the action of school boards and others, and to provide means whereby every child, either by means of higher schools, higher departments, or, in the event of those two methods failing, by means of bursaries, will be brought within the reach of a school giving efficient higher education, should he or she be able to profit by it. We propose to take as our unit of administration the county and some of the larger burghs, and the parish of Govan which at present has a higher education committee of its own. I am sorry that it has not been found possible to lay down, in precise terms, the constitution of these higher committees, the circumstances of which differ very widely. We propose to do that by schemes to be subsequently approved by Parliament. The reason for that is this, that the circumstances of the counties

and the towns differ so widely. We intend that there shall be upon these higher education committees a considerable representation of the municipal element, whether county council or town council, that those school boards which give higher education shall also be represented, and that there shall be a small admixture of gentlemen chosen for their interest in education and on account of their possessing the confidence of the locality. It is impossible, as I have said, to prescribe in any one case a scheme which will be satisfactory for every county in Scotland. When I tell your Lordships that in the county of Lanark there is a population of more than a million; that in Kinross, the smallest county in Scotland, there are only 6,000 people; that the number of burghs in the county of Fife is twenty-eight, some of them extremely small; that in Inverness, which is a much larger county, there are only three burghs; and that in the county of Aberdeen there are eighty-three parishes, whilst in three or four of the smallest counties in Scotland there are only five parishes, it will be seen how very diverse are the circumstances with which we have to deal. We have under consideration the expediency of dividing some of the larger counties. These committees, once established, and the proportions once settled upon which the various interests in them shall be represented, will have a permanent statutory position. They will be independent of the Department to a much greater extent than they are at the present time, and they will have statutory powers for regulating higher education within their various bounds. One question which confronted us was whether we should have to break altogether with the principle of purely local management for the school; in other words, should we have to attempt to take the burgh school from the school boards and limit the operations of those boards to elementary education only? We do not think that would be for the public interest. We value greatly the careful and constant supervision and the intimate acquaintance with local needs which perhaps can only be got in the highest efficiency from a purely local board, and on other grounds we thought it not desirable. There are other institutions, endowed schools and voluntary schools, which must remain under local management, and therefore we have

thought it better not to attempt to take away the management of any school from the local authority under which it is now placed, but to confine the new bodies which we are setting up to the large powers, as they will be, of supervision and regulation, and to the complete power of control which will be given by the financial provisions to be found in this Bill. They will have power to admit and exclude all schools, both higher schools and higher departments, from the benefits of this Act; they will have, as I have said, a large measure of financial control; they will have an ample opportunity of expressing their opinion upon the curriculum of the various schools, although, in that matter, there will be an appeal to the Department, because it is obviously more of an educational than a financial character. They will have power to employ teachers, where necessary, in the schools under local management, with the consent of the bodies who manage those schools; and they will have power to contribute to, and, I hope, to be represented on, the management of large central institutions for advanced scientific and technical education. We believe that by these means they will be better able to compare the results which are attained in different schools through the zeal of the local managers. We believe that a county authority so constituted will be able to arrange that the various educational agencies within their district shall not interfere with each other, and that there shall be no overlapping of provisions, much less a wasting of resources, which, I am afraid, is the case at the present time. The absence of any local authority makes it difficult to give the grants-in-aid from the central fund upon any proper system, and your Lordships will be aware that deficiencies in the funds of various schools arise from a great variety of causes. Some get very little assistance from the rates, some are, perhaps, extravagant in their management, some are starved by having too low a fee, and some, with a mistaken idea of keeping the school exclusive, have too high a fee, and do not exercise the influence upon the locality which they might otherwise do. The premises which are provided vary very greatly, and one of the chief duties of these county committees will be to consider all these various circumstances, and how far the local management meets the requirements of the district; in

fact, they will represent the wider area which profits by these schools, and as they have these duties so they will have the power to come to the assistance of the local authorities and lighten the too heavy burdens which are now pressing upon them. We hope that the provisions of the Bill, which, I think, I had better leave to speak for themselves, will be found to provide that the grants in future will be distributed on well-defined principles, and upon principles which will be distinctly stated and understood by all concerned, and that they will be to a large extent in proportion to local effort. But, at the same time, the really effective control will be divided between the two local bodies interested, the local school board or managers, and the county authority. In regard to the charges upon this Higher Education Fund which I have mentioned, the first will be the cost of inspection. That may amount to £8,000 or £9,000 a year, but we do not think it will very largely increase. There will then have to be a certain charge for the higher schools. We propose to put them upon an equal footing with the higher departments. These higher departments, as I have indicated, are at the present time in a position of considerable advantage; they get large grants from the Code, never much less than 50s. per head and sometimes as much as £5 10s. In those grants the higher schools do not share, and we propose, as a second charge upon the Higher Education (Scotland) Fund, to put a charge for an "equalising grant" of about £3 per head for the pupils in attendance in the higher schools. This we believe will come to about £33,000 a year. The balance of £110,000 will remain for all the other purposes of the localities as decided by the county committees. We allow these committees to make arrangements whereby the distribution of the central fund will depend very largely in proportion to the extent to which the localities themselves meet their own burdens. I do not think I need go into the matter in further detail. Broadly, I may say, with regard to the financial provisions, that we believe and hope that the deficiency in any school fund will, as a rule, be made up in the following proportion. We propose that a quarter of it will be chargeable to the immediate locality, that another quarter will come from the resources of the county

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authority, and that the remaining half will be made up from the central fund. A special definition of higher education is inserted in the Bill for the purpose of meeting and covering a great deal of the special and useful work which is now done under the county councils and through their agencies. As is customary, we have not confined this Bill to higher education only. There are one or two other points which we have thought it necessary to include. There is one clause which deals with the attendance of children at elementary schools. The evils of what is known as the standard exemption—that is, exemption on the attainment of a certain standard, perhaps at a very young age—have been present to the minds of many educational authorities in Scotland for some years. It is possible, at the present time, for an exceptionally clever boy of ten to pass the fifth standard, and so get exemption from school long before the age at which he could undertake any useful work, and as a consequence his time is simply wasted. In place of a purely standard exemption we propose to insert the age of fourteen; but should this age be thought too severe, the school board may exempt any child after the age of twelve if he goes to an evening continuation school. I believe public opinion in Scotland is ripe for that change. At any rate, we believe the new condition will do much to bridge over the dangerous year which elapses after a clever boy has passed the fifth standard, and the age at which he can be taken into continuous employment. There is another matter with which I have attempted to deal, which has been the subject of much controversy. It may be in the recollection of noble Lords from Scotland that a year or two ago the question of the tenure of office of teachers was very much discussed. Many allegations of hardship in the matter of dismissal were made. I asked at the time, from those who came to me on a deputation, for a statement of specific cases, and I gave them very careful consideration, with the result that after a very thorough inquiry I was not convinced that a good case had been made out for all that the teachers demanded. They were anxious for a court of appeal. I am desirous that every legitimate hardship should be removed; but I find it difficult to place any limit whatever on the discretion of school boards with reference to the em-

ployment of their teachers, or to compel them to continue to employ a teacher whom they wish to dismiss. I have not seen my way to interfere with the power of school boards in that matter, or to set up a court of appeal. At one time I did think that, in regard to those schools which will remain under local management but which give higher education, and which will be subject to the review of the new county authority, I might bring in the county authority more as a court of conciliation though not of appeal between school boards and teachers, but I have, after full consideration, abandoned that idea. There is, however, a clause in this Bill which empowers the Department, in cases where they are satisfied that it would be right to do so, to grant a certificate to a teacher who has been dismissed that in spite of his dismissal his work has been satisfactory. Some cases occur in which from, perhaps, misunderstanding, want of tact on one side or on both sides, or from certain casual circumstances, a bad feeling grows up, and it results in a state of matters in which it is not in the interests of education in the parish that a teacher, though he is morally blameless and actually efficient as a teacher, should remain in the school, and the object we have in inserting this clause is solely to secure that a teacher who has lost his employment through no very grave fault of his own should not have his professional position destroyed. The granting to him of a certificate to the effect that he is an efficient teacher may help him in securing further employment. There is only one other topic to which I need allude, it is that of a Consultative Committee. A Consultative Committee has been established, I know, for Wales, and one will shortly be established by the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council for England. In regard to this question as effecting Scotland, I have had a variety of representations on both sides. I venture to think that the cases of Scotland and of England are hardly paralled in this matter. Scotland has much less to do in the matter of the organisation of its system of higher education than is the case in England. Secondary Education has for a long time been part of our national system of education, and I do not find any difficulty in ascertaining Scottish opinion. I believe that in most cases I could forecast pretty accurately the view which any

particular district in Scotland would take in regard to any matter of importance which might be put before it. But, on many matters of administration, large towns such as Edinburgh and Glasgow differ materially from one another. There are different problems affecting Highland and Lowland counties, and there are points of difference between urban and rural districts, and even between two classes of rural districts, those which are pastoral in their character and those which are arable, which questions are often very difficult and require separate consideration from an educational point of view. I propose, therefore, to rely mainly for advice and assistance upon the county committees. I believe they will form the best consultative committees for the Vice-President of the Scotch Education Department. They will exist all over Scotland, and will know intimately the needs of their own particular district, and I myself look with considerable jealousy upon the establishment of any committee which will tend to come between the Vice-President of the Council and the local bodies who are aiding the local work of education. I hold the opinion that the country is not too large for anyone to arrive at its opinions, and, as I have said, its inhabitants are by no means backward in making suggestions when their interests are affected. Those suggestions, on matters affecting the Code, for example, are carefully tabulated and considered each year when the Code is being revised. I do not regard this as a matter of principle. Although I have indicated my view, I am open to argument and conviction on the subject, and if I find there is a more general desire for a Consultative Committee in Scotland than I believe there is, I shall be willing to revise my opinion. But if representations in that direction are to be made, I hope they will be definite recommendations. I shall be glad to be informed as precisely as possible how the Consultative Committee is to be formed; whether, for example, it is to be manned by those who are already recognised authorities. If so, their ideas are already fixed and may be difficult to change, but in any case their opinion can be ascertained, whether they are on the committee or not. If it is to be manned by men taken haphazard, I think the experiment will be a dangerous one. I shall, as I have said, listen to any

representations, on one side or the other, which may be made to me on that subject. I have ventured to detain your Lordships at greater length than is usual with me, but I hope you will not grudge the time I have occupied on account of the great importance of the subject. I now respectfully ask the House to give the Bill a First Reading.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I think that I shall exercise a wise Scottish caution if I do not attempt to go in anything like detail into the subject which the noble Lord has just brought before the House. I may, however, express what I am sure will be the universal opinion in Scotland, that we are extremely glad to welcome a Bill which is directed to the improvement and the consolidation of secondary education in Scotland. There is no portion of Her Majesty's dominions where education is more highly valued than in Scotland, and I am sure the experience of the past also shows that there is no part of Her Majesty's dominions where the value of secondary education is more highly esteemed than north of the Tweed. I understand that at the present moment there are three funds which are, or can be, more or less devoted to the purposes of secondary and technical education, and that it is proposed to consolidate those funds and use them for the purpose of secondary education in Scotland. I assume that in the future the £50,000 or more which is devoted from the Local Taxation Fund, and which may be used either for the relief of rates or for technical education, will be used entirely for the purpose of education, and that the power of devoting any portion to the relief of the rates will be taken away. That is very satisfactory, and I am glad to welcome the change in the allocation of this money. The noble Lord also spoke of a further sum of £100,000 which is used for certain local purposes, and a portion of which can be used for secondary education. I am sorry that he simply held out the possibility of a portion of this sum being taken for secondary education. I should have been more pleased if he had at once said that he intended to devote a certain portion to the same purpose as the other funds. I think it would have been much better if the noble Lord had named the full sum which could be devoted to secondary

education in Scotland. The new system of secondary education would have started more happily on its way if it had been at once endowed to the full amount that was possible, and arrangements could have been made at the very outset for the administration of the larger sum. The local committees which are to deal with this subject are, I understand, to consist of representatives of the school boards and the county authorities or burgh authorities within the various areas. The noble Lord did not tell us what proportion one would bear to the other, or whether others would be added by the Department or by election to those committees. As I understand, the county committee will consist partly of members of the school boards of the county, and partly of members appointed by the county council. I do not know whether that is to be the complete constitution of the committee, and I should be glad to be informed on this point. With regard to the proposed Consultative Committee, I thought the argument that my noble friend put forward in support of his case against the Consultative Committee might very well have been used in favour of such a committee, because he pointed out that in Scotland there were many differences of opinion and that he could almost forecast them. I quite recognise that the noble Lord has every opportunity of discovering the differences of opinion, because I know how very ready my countrymen are to present before the Department which looks after them the various convictions they hold. I agree that the differences of opinion in Scotland are very great, and that an opinion held in the west would, for that very reason, be refused in the east; but I think that is an argument in favour of the formation of some solid consultative body which might try to secure uniformity of action among the various local secondary education committees. I am not prepared, on the spur of the moment, to suggest what the exact constitution of such a committee should be, but I must say that I look with a little suspicion on the proposal of my noble friend the Secretary for Scotland, which amounts to this, that the body which is to act as the consultative committee, and which is to secure uniformity in Scotland, is the Scotch Education Board, or, in other words, the Scotch Office. I think we should like to have a little say of our

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own in that matter. We are not prepared to leave it in the hands, however excellent they may be, of the authorities at the Scotch Office. I am rather inclined to agree that it is impossible for the Bill to lay down the exact conditions under which each particular committee throughout the country is to act. I fully recognise the immense differences there are between the various burghs and counties in Scotland, and I quite see that to really satisfy the wants of each locality it is necessary to deal with each one separately. I quite understand that no general provision in the Bill could give thorough satisfaction in that respect. I am very glad to welcome the announcement that the school age is to be raised to fourteen—a step which will recommend itself to us in Scotland—and I also desire once more to express my pleasure that a Bill dealing with Secondary Education in Scotland has been brought forward, and is to be proceeded with and carried into law during the present session.

***LORD REAY:** My Lords, as I have often urged my noble friend opposite to introduce this Bill, I wish to add my thanks to those expressed by my noble friend Lord Tweedmouth, that at last he has done so. I shall not anticipate the criticism which may be the result of a careful perusal of its contents, but the Secretary for Scotland has alluded to the Code of last year. I wish to seize this, the first opportunity I have, to congratulate him on the success of that Code. That Code, by introducing the system of cohesive courses of instruction, has, in my opinion, conferred a greater benefit on Scottish education than could be conferred by any administrative proceeding; and, if imitation is the best form of flattery, the noble Lord must have felt great satisfaction when he saw that in the recently issued Code for England the example of Scotland had been followed. In other respects, however, the tendency of the two Codes is entirely different. Whereas my noble friend the Secretary for Scotland gives the school boards every encouragement in dealing with secondary education—and I am extremely pleased to hear that the measure he has now laid before your Lordships does not interfere with the direction of school boards—the tendency of the English Education Department,

as illustrated by the new Code, is to make it more and more difficult for school boards to have those higher departments on which in Scotland we lay so much stress. The only other point to which I shall allude is the success of the merit and leaving certificates; and there, again, he may be pleased to hear that the London School Board have instituted a merit certificate, in order that it may have the same effect which the noble Lord wishes it to have in Scotland—namely, to supersede the labour certificate. I trust that my noble friend will allow plenty of time for the examination of this very important measure by the educational experts in Scotland. For myself, I shall consider it a very pleasant duty to give the noble Lord all the co-operation in my power in passing this Bill.

***LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH:** I will gladly consider the suggestion of my noble friend Lord Tweedmouth, with regard to the £100,000. With the assistance of the noble Lord and his friends I may, perhaps, be able to get a part of that money, but I rather shrank from taking it, in the fear that I should incur considerable opposition. In reply to the noble Lord's question as to the constitution of the committees, the Bill provided that for each of the districts enumerated in the schedule there shall be established a local authority for higher education, to be called the Local Higher Education Committee. The Department will, after due inquiry, prepare a scheme for the constitution of the local higher education committee in each district, and such scheme will make provision for the representation on the committee of the county council, town councils, and the commissioners of such police burghs as have a population above ten thousand, of school boards and other managers of schools recognised as giving higher education, and such other persons conversant with educational reform as may be nominated by the committee. The latter will be in a small minority, and the number will be fixed in each scheme.

Bill to amend and extend the provisions of the law of Scotland on the subject of education—presented by the Lord Balfour; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 31.)

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY—AFFILIATION WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I beg to ask the Lord President of the Council why, by Section 11 of the Charter of the new Birmingham University, the University is empowered "to admit to affiliation with it, or to any of its privileges, any college or institution or the members or students thereof" without any such limitation of the area within which such colleges or institutions must be situated as is prescribed by the new statutes of the University of London. I have placed this question on the Paper because attention has been drawn to the fact that there is a difference of rather an important kind in the provisions of the charter of the new Birmingham University and the statutes which provide for the reconstructed University of London. I had mentioned the Victoria University, but I find I was misinformed, and that in that university there was no limitation of the area in which they might affiliate schools, colleges, or other institutions. The point is not, I think, without some interest. In the new statutes of London University it is provided that all the schools or institutions admitted to affiliation by the university must be situated within the administrative county of London. There is a further provision, as regards those who may be admitted as teachers of the university, that any person who is approved as a teacher of the university may be admitted if he resides within a radius of thirty miles from the building in which the university is located. In the case of the Birmingham charter, as I read it, there is no limitation of the kind, and the result will be that the Birmingham University will be able to affiliate to itself any school or institution in any part of the country. I think it is possible that if there is no limitation in the case of these new universities some difficulty and conflict may arise; for it is obvious that if there are, as seems very probable, numerous universities established, they will be sometimes tempted to compete with one another, and there may arise a kind of Dutch auction—namely, in order to attract to themselves institutions in different parts of the country, the universities may lower their examination standard. That is a danger which is by no means a visionary one, and it is

obvious that it would be a very unfortunate result. I think myself that the limitation that has been imposed on the University of London is a wise and workable one, and I thought, therefore, that I might reasonably ask the Lord President of the Council why the same principle of limiting the area of operations has not been followed in the case of the Birmingham charter. It seems very desirable that there should be some principle upon which these new institutions should be established. I think it is probable that there may be further universities founded in other parts of the country, and it would be unfortunate if there was any clashing between the different universities, and if such a proceeding as I have described for the purpose of attracting schools to a particular university should arise. I do not ask this question with the slightest hostility to the Birmingham University, nor from a belief that there is any particular reason why the Birmingham University should be more aggressive than any other body. I simply wish to elicit from the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council an expression of opinion as to what principle is likely to be adhered to in the constitution of these new and important bodies.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, the limitation of the area within which schools of the university may be created in connection with the University of London was introduced into the new statutes by direction of the Act; and the noble Lord is aware that such limitation was an essential part of the compromise under which the colleges and teaching institutions of London were induced to accept the arrangements proposed for the creation of a teaching university. In the charter of the Victoria University, the university court is empowered to accept the application of any incorporated college to be admitted as a college in the university on being satisfied as to the completeness of the curriculum, the sufficiency of the staff, the adequacy of the appliances for teaching, and the independent control of the college applying. It appears from section 20 of the statutes of the Birmingham University that the conditions of application, though in more general terms, aim at a similar standard. No objection was raised to the section of the charter, to

which Lord Kimberley refers, in the many months during which the draft charter was exposed to public criticism, and it was not for the Privy Council to introduce a limitation that was not suggested by the promoters or called for in other quarters. With regard to the apprehension which was expressed by my noble friend as to the possibility of undue competition between the universities of the future, and a possible lowering of the standard of admission of colleges to such universities, I do not think I have ever heard it suggested that there has ever been any such tendency in the case of the Victoria University, and so far as I am aware that university would be very unwilling under present conditions to extend its area of operations. It is scarcely for the Privy Council to propose a limitation which is not desired by the promoters of the charter, and which no representative body appeared to think it necessary to suggest.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My object in bringing the matter before the House was merely to question, to a certain extent, the policy which has been pursued, and not to find fault with the proceedings of the Privy Council in following another precedent. My feeling is that as there will probably be more such universities established in the future, it is very desirable that the whole question of affiliation should be considered, not merely with reference to the wishes of a particular locality, but in the interests of university education throughout the country.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON STATUTES —DELAY IN PRINTING.

*LORD REAY: My Lords, when I placed my question on the Paper—namely, “To ask the Lord President of the Council why the statutes made for the University of London by the Commissioners under the University of London Act, 1898, which were laid on the Table on the 16th February, have not yet been circulated”—the statutes made for the University of London had not been circulated, but I have now to ask the reason of the delay in the circulation of the statutes which were laid on the Table on 16th February, and which were not in the hands of your Lordships until 15th March. The matter is of no importance if the statutory period during which the

Statutes may be examined by Parliament is made to run from the time the documents are circulated, but it matters a great deal if that statutory period runs from the time the documents are laid on the Table. I understand that the highest authority in another place has ruled, on March 28th of last year,* that the Paper must be laid in full upon the Table. I suppose that in this House the same practice will have to be adopted, otherwise it would be in the power of the Stationery Office to limit that statutory period. If the Statutes are laid on the Table on February 16th and only circulated on March 15th, then the period of forty days is virtually altered into a period of fourteen days, which makes a great difference. The Code Regulations for Day Schools were laid on the Table on February 27th, and were only to be obtained yesterday, the remaining period allowed in that case being less than half the month prescribed by the Education Act of 1870. I may, perhaps, ask the noble Duke whether he considers that the statutory period runs from the time the Papers are laid upon the Table, or from the date when they are accessible to Members of the House.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, before I answer my noble friend's question I ought to remind him that the Privy Council have absolutely no responsibility in this matter. Their duties were fulfilled when the Statutes were laid on the Table of your Lordships' House. I have, however, endeavoured to ascertain the facts of the case. The direction to print is stated by the printers to have been given on 16th February, but the officials of the House do not appear to have informed the Stationery Office that copies were required from the standing type until the end of February, and, owing to some misunderstanding at the Stationery Office, the order to the printer to throw the type into Parliamentary form was not given until March 6. Since that date the printers have pressed forward the printing with the utmost despatch, and the Statutes were circulated yesterday. I cannot answer the question the noble Lord has put to me, which is not on the Paper. I do not conceive that the ruling to which he has referred, which was given in the other House, would be

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxi., page 647.

applicable in this case, and I presume that the statutory period would date from the time when the Statutes were laid on the Table. I may be allowed to point out that the non-circulation of the Statutes at an earlier date can hardly have been the cause of any practical inconvenience, as a notice was inserted in the *Gazette* of February 16th pointing out that copies could be obtained by any person or body directly affected at the office of the London University Commission. The same was done in the case of the Regulations, which were laid on the Table on March 1st.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I can quite understand that the noble Duke has really no power in the matter, but I should like to know who is responsible for the delay, because it is scandalous that important papers should not be obtainable at the Vote Office when they are wanted. No doubt the noble Duke and the noble Marquess at the head of the Government are quite aware that this delay is constantly occurring, and I cannot understand why some remedy has not been applied. We on this side of the House are absolutely powerless in the matter, but I cannot believe that noble Lords on the other side are without some power to insist upon a remedy for this great abuse. Although, as the noble Duke says, there was a means of obtaining a copy of the Statutes, I do not think Members of this House should be compelled to go to some institution to obtain Papers which, as Members of this House, they are entitled to have as soon as they are printed. I therefore hope the noble Duke, or the noble Marquess at the head of the Government, will endeavour to procure for us reasonable facilities for obtaining these Papers.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): The noble Earl, with a rash hand, has unveiled one of the mysteries of the British Constitution. In the course of a considerable Parliamentary life, from the very beginning of it, my earnest ambition has been to emancipate ourselves from the tyranny of the Parliamentary printers, but never from that day to this have I been able to discover who was the person responsible for the action of those printers, or who possessed the precious privilege of com-

The Duke of Devonshire.

elling them to do their duty. If the noble Earl could help me in the matter, I should be glad, but, short of sending them to the Tower, which is an antiquated remedy, I know of no method to force them to do something which they have taken it into their heads not to do.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I may mention that printed copies of the important telegram from the Presidents of the South African Republics and the Prime Minister's reply thereto were obtainable in the House of Commons the night on which they were announced, whereas in this House they could not be obtained until about forty-eight hours afterwards.

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM BILL [H.L.]

[SECOND READING.]

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, this is the third time I have moved the Second Reading of this Bill, but I have not succeeded in getting it through the other House of Parliament. I have already fully explained the objects of the Bill, which is one very much required by the locality, and I will not detain your Lordships on this occasion, but will simply move that it be read a second time.

Bill read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

WAR LOAN BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Monday next (The Marquess of Salisbury): and Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with. (No. 32.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Six of the clock.
to Monday next, half-past Eleven of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 16th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PONTEFRACT PARK BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

ELECTRIC POWER BILLS (BY ORDER).

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [15th March], "That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding Seven Members, to whom shall be committed the following private Bills by which it is proposed to supply electric power :—

Lancashire Electric Power Bill,
Durham (County of) Electric Power Supply Bill,
South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill,
Tyneside Electric Power Bill

(read a second time on Thursday, 1st March).—(*Lord Balcarras*.)

And which Amendment was—

"To leave out the words 'the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding Seven Members,' in order to insert the words 'a Select Committee be appointed' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Gallwey*.)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (*Mr. Ritchie, Croydon*): I have to apologise for not being in my place yesterday, but I had an appointment elsewhere and was not able to be present. There is one point in which I am in agreement with my hon. friend the Member for South-west Manchester in reference to these proposals, and there is also a point in which we are in dispute. The point in agreement is that these Bills are so important in character that they ought not to be referred to an ordinary Private Bill Committee. That is the point in agreement between us; but when we come to the character of the Committee to which they should be referred my hon. friend and myself at once diverge. My hon. friend proposes that the Committee to which these Bills should be referred should be a Select Committee. Now, I have two objections to their being referred to a Select Committee. One objection is that if they are referred to a Select Committee they would have, in addition to passing through that Committee, to pass through another Committee. That is a very serious objection, because it would

mean inevitable delay, and probably the loss of the Bills this year. The Select Committee does not stand in the position of the ordinary Private Bill Committee, but I have another objection, and that is this. A Select Committee is a Committee nominated by this House, selected from both sides of the House, and I contend that is not at all the way to select a Committee to consider Bills of this important character. Gentlemen are selected to serve on the Committee who either offer to serve because of the interest they take upon the subject or because they represent one side or the other of the two parties interested, and that I maintain is not the kind of Committee which ought to deal with these Bills. We want a perfectly independent Committee selected by the ordinary tribunal, the Committee of Selection, composed of gentlemen who have no interest in the Bills except to hear and judge the evidence which is put before them. It is felt by many that a Committee to which other Bills might be referred, which is not specifically constituted for a special class of Bills, will not be strong enough to deal with these. Let it be remembered that this is a new departure, and if the House assent to these Bills it will assent to a very important departure. The circumstances of the case justify the House in assenting to that departure, but it ought to take care that the Committee to which these Bills are referred should be specially selected by the Committee of Selection for this purpose, and that the Committee ought not to be so small a Committee as the ordinary Private Bill Committee. For the reason that a Select Committee is a Committee which is largely composed of partisans of either one side or the other, and for the other reasons I have mentioned, I object to a Select Committee. I support the motion of my noble friend because I think the Committee should be a stronger Committee than the ordinary Private Bill Committee.

MR. BRYCE (*Aberdeen, S.*): The House has before it what is really a very important question, because it involves far greater measures than those which come before the House by means of a Private Bill. We have to choose between three kinds of Committees to which these Bills might be referred. There is the ordinary Private Bill

Committee, then there is the Hybrid Committee, and thirdly there is a Select Committee. There is a fourth course which might be taken, and I am not sure, but for one objection which I should like to mention, but what that would not be the best course of all. I think the best thing would be to have a Joint Committee of both Houses; at the same time I quite appreciate the fact that if these Bills were referred to such a Committee the opponents of the Bills might feel that if in a case of this kind the Report of the Committee went against them they would lose the opportunity of bringing them before a Committee of this House. I think there is a great deal to be said in favour of having a Committee of such strength and dignity as would be obtained by the appointment of a Committee of both Houses. Clearly the ordinary Private Bill Committee could not deal with a matter of this kind. It is admitted on all sides that the magnitude and gravity of the matter is such that it ought to be referred to a Committee of very great strength. I do not think a Select Committee would necessarily be the partisan Committee which the right hon. Gentleman suggested. It is perfectly true that the general tendency of such Committees has been to become partisan Committees, but it is not their essential quality. I think it is only right that on a Select Committee there should be one partisan of each side to see fair play, but the rest of the Committee should be absolutely impartial. At the same time I admit that there is a great deal in what the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has said, and the same objection applies equally to the Hybrid Committee. Therefore, we come to the third class of Committee. That is a Committee appointed by the Committee of Selection, which would be absolutely impartial, and I do not see why my hon. friend should not be satisfied with such a Committee. We are all well satisfied with the Committee of Selection, which has discharged its duties well for many years. We know now the views that have been expressed as to the shape which this Committee ought to take, and I cannot but think that effect will only be given to those views by the appointment of a strong Committee of seven members which is strictly impartial. I do not think we can doubt for a moment but that the Committee of

Mr. Bryce.

Selection will take pains to select only such persons as have no interest one way or the other. This discussion has been very valuable, and I think now both my hon. friends on this side of the House and upon that opposite may safely leave the matter to the Committee of Selection.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down made a suggestion which, if really before us, would deserve careful examination. But as I understand the question before the House, a motion has been made by the noble Lord to refer these Bills to a Committee appointed by the Committee of Selection. Since then an Amendment has been made by the hon. Member for South-west Manchester in favour of this House appointing the Committee, but I do not gather that he proposes to press that Amendment very strongly. I rise to support the motion of the noble Lord. I have a very strong feeling myself that we have gone very much too far in the matter of Hybrid Committees, which have grown almost to be a scandal, and I hope we have nearly seen the last of them. I am in perfect agreement with those who say that the ordinary Private Bill Committee is too small for a case of this kind, and I entirely approve of these Bills being referred to a larger Committee. What we want to do in this case is to maintain and strengthen, if we can, the principle adopted by the Private Bill Committee, the fundamental idea of which is that the whole element of advocacy is excluded. Hon. Members who are appointed on a Private Bill Committee have to sit *de die in diem*, and they have to make a declaration that neither they nor their constituents are interested in the subject matter referred to the Committee, and the chairman, who has the casting vote, is a man of great experience, not selected by the Committee itself, but by the Committee of Selection. That was the system set up in this House in 1844 for Railway Bills, and as regards others in 1855, and it has worked most admirably as an efficient tribunal. In this case we can trust the Committee of Selection to find seven members. I have a motion on the Paper which is almost in the same terms as that of the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), and my object was to support the noble Lord in his motion to refer this matter not to a Committee of this House or to a Select

Committee, but to an enlarged Private Bill Committee.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): I think I may be allowed to say that the result of this interesting debate shows that I was fully justified in bringing my Amendment forward, because the original motion was that, although the Committee was to be composed of seven members, three should form a quorum. I now desire to ask leave to ask the noble Lord, if I agree to withdraw my Amendment, will he agree to withdraw that part of his motion in favour of three members forming a quorum, and say that the whole seven only should form a quorum.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I have taken some interest in private Bill legislation, and when I had the honour to occupy the position now occupied by my right honourable friend opposite, I was confronted with this question of the appointment of Hybrid Committees, and I then said that I would not propose a Hybrid Committee again. I agree with every word that the hon. Member for Rushcliffe has said in respect to them. I think these Private Bill Committees are and should be considered judicial bodies, and that no man ought to sit upon them who has, personally, or whose constituents have the slightest interest in the matters with which they have to deal. I feel that of late years the character of this House has been imperilled by its nominating gentleman on Select Committees to represent various interests, and I think the time has come when that representation of interests should cease if the House is to keep the confidence of the country as a just and impartial body, and the Committees of the House are to be regarded as absolutely impartial tribunals. Parties affected should appear by counsel, not by members of the Committee who are at once judges and jury. In the case of these Bills there should not be a quorum of the Committee. The same rule that prevails in Private Bill Committees should apply. Every member of the Committee to which these Bills are referred should be bound to hear and judge the evidence. What does a quorum mean? It means that gentlemen have appointments elsewhere when they ought to be in attendance on the Committee, and I have seen such a scandalous thing as members of a Committee coming in to

vote for resolutions and amendments without having heard a word of the evidence. I quite agree with the President of the Local Government Board that this should be a strong Committee of seven members, and that in all other respects it should fulfil all the obligations and be subject to all liabilities of the ordinary Private Bill Committee.

*LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I would merely like to say, in the event of my hon. friend withdrawing his Amendment, I shall be prepared to omit the motion standing in my name that three shall form a quorum.

MR. GALLOWAY: I beg leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I desire to submit to the President of the Board of Trade an Amendment to omit the words "not exceeding," and in their place insert "of." Everybody who has spoken upon the matter has taken it for granted that there will be seven members on the Committee. It has been the guiding principle of the argument put forward that it should be a large Committee, and I think the House would be willing to express that opinion by accepting this Amendment. I beg to move.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'not exceeding,' and insert the word 'of.'" — (Sir John Brunner.)

MR. HALSEY (Hertfordshire, Watford): The invariable practice of the Committee of Selection upon receiving the Instruction, "A Committee not exceeding seven members," would be to appoint seven members, and I do not think that that practice has ever been departed from. Owing to my having been in the country I did not hear the beginning of the debate, but, from what I have heard, may I take this opportunity of expressing my satisfaction that there is a prospect of the Amendment of my hon. friend the Member for Gloucester being accepted, because I think it is most desirable that this should be a Committee under the

ordinary rules that govern Committees on Private Bills. I was glad to hear what the right hon. Gentleman opposite said about Hybrid Committees, because it does seem to me that the Committee ought to be in the position of a judicial body and that partisans should be excluded from it. I hope that upon similar propositions the House will bear in mind the suggestion which the right hon. Gentleman has made.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER: This Amendment deals with a matter which, to my mind, is of great importance, for it will mean a declaration by the House of the principle which has just been enunciated.

MR. RITCHIE: After what my hon. friend the Chairman of the Committee of Selection has said it would appear that this Amendment is not necessary, but at the same time I cannot see any harm in it. It makes it perfectly plain what the House desires, and I would suggest that it be accepted.

Amendment agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put and agreed to.

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee of Seven Members, to whom shall be committed the following Private Bills by which it is proposed to supply electric power—

Lancashire Electric Power Bill,
Durham (County of) Electric Power Supply Bill,
South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill,
Tyneside Electric Power Bill,

(read a second time on Thursday, 1st March).

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That the Committee be subject to the Standing Orders relative to the proceedings of Committees on Opposed Bills (except that fixing the number of Members).—(*Mr. Monk.*)

WOLVERHAMPTON, ESSINGTON, AND CANNOCK CHASE JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL.

Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Wol-

Mr. Halsey.

verhampton and Essington Mineral Railway Bill of Session 1898, and on the London and North Western (New Railways) Bill of Session 1899, be referred to the Committee on Group No. 3 in respect of the Wolverhampton, Essington, and Cannock Chase Junction Railway Bill.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1).

Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the town of Westport, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General for Ireland and Mr. Gerald Balfour.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) BILL.

"To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the town of Westport," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 129.]

COLONIAL BANK BILL.

Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time.

GRANTHAM GAS BILL.

REDHILL GAS BILL.

CITY AND SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

AIRDRIE, COATBRIDGE, AND DISTRICT WATER TRUST BILL.

Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

OSSET CORPORATION GAS BILL.

STOCKPORT CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL.

WAKEFIELD CORPORATION MARKET BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

Mr. Lewis Fry reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, to meet the convenience of parties, they

had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Yardley ; Worcester ; Aberystwyth ; and Hammer-smith ; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Leighton Buzzard ; Ranskill ; Bedford ; and Hunsanton ; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Parkstone ; Runcorn ; Croydon ; Hove ; Chorley ; Preston ; Salford ; and Prestwich ; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Lee ; Urmston ; Parkstone ; Barnsley ; Chelsea ; Preston ; Croydon ; Leighton Buzzard ; Nantwich ; Heywood ; Bury ; Patricroft (two) ; Fulham ; Brighton ; Stockport ; Whitby (eight) ; Bedfordshire ; Coventry ; Bedford ; and Cwmsyflog ; to lie upon the Table.

TEINDS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the Disestablishment Council of Scotland, against ; to lie upon the Table.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Grangemouth, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Return [presented 15th March] to be printed. [No. 99.]

SPRING ASSIZES ACT, 1879.

Copies presented, of Two Orders in Council of 3rd March, 1900, relating to Spring Assize Counties, Nos. 2 and 3 [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

VOL. LXXX. [FOURTH SERIES.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 3rd March, 1900, confirming certain Bye-laws made by the Port Talbot Pilotage Board [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 3rd March, 1900, reducing the dues leviable by the Trinity House of Kingston-upon-Hull in respect of the Lights in the Humber above that Port [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.

Copy presented, of Order in Council, of 3rd March, 1900, giving effect to an Extradition Treaty between Her Majesty and the Republic of San Marino [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Order in Council, of 3rd March, 1900, entitled "The China and Corea (Supreme Court) Order in Council, 1900" [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHES).

Copy presented, of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Camberwell and Westminster, and incorporating the Councils thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 100.]

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 523 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL MANŒUVRES, 1899.

Copy presented, of Paper, entitled "Naval Manœuvres, 1899" [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—USAGES OF WAR—BOER ABUSE OF THE WHITE FLAG.

MR. PLATT-HIGGINS (Salford, N.) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state the number of

officers and men who have been killed or wounded since the commencement of the war through the display by the enemy of a flag of truce; if not, whether there would be any objection to calling for such a Return.

MR. LUCAS-SHADWELL (Hastings): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he would call for a Return stating the number of officers and men who have been killed and wounded in the recent actions in South Africa after the display by the Boers of the white flag; and whether any officers or men have been taken prisoners under these circumstances.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): I will reply to these questions together. I am afraid that it would not be possible to prepare such a Return. In saying that I throw no doubt upon the established fact that many officers and men have lost their lives or their freedom through this practice, but it would be impossible to prove individual cases without something in the nature of a judicial inquiry that is quite beyond our power.

AMBULANCE SERVICE VOLUNTEERS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that volunteers for ambulance service in South Africa are examined and enrolled by the St. John's Ambulance Association, and that a volunteer may be rejected on account of being over the standard of height, although exceptionally well qualified in every other respect for the service; and whether there is any reason why such volunteers should not be specially enlisted.

MR. WYNDHAM: These volunteers are examined and enrolled by the commissioner and medical officers of the brigade. A maximum height was originally arranged with the War Office at 5ft. 10in., in order to obtain bearers whose heights did not greatly vary, but the commissioner was allowed free discretion to accept suitable men although above this height.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: If I give the right hon. Gentleman a case in point, will he inquire into it?

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, with pleasure; but I have said that power is given to exercise discretion.

COMFORTS FOR THE TROOPS—DELAYS IN DISTRIBUTION.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War why quantities of socks, caps, tobacco, and other comforts sent out months ago for the officers and men of the Natal Field Force have not been delivered to them. Why have they not received the gift of chocolate of Her Gracious Majesty the Queen; whether there is a large accumulation of parcels for the Natal Field Force at Durban, and whether there is any officer at Durban charged with the duty of seeing to the distribution of these parcels; and, if not, why has not one been appointed.

MR. WYNDHAM: There is no information at the War Office that confirms the statement made in the first three paragraphs of the question. But it is very probable that, owing to the enormous quantities of supplies and stores required for the daily use of the field force in Natal, the military authorities have been unable to secure the early delivery of these presents to the troops, in addition to carrying out their military duties. The excellent arrangements made by Mr. Hamilton Gatliff at the Cape have recently been extended to Durban, and there is no doubt that in future there will be no delay in the distribution of parcels beyond what is unavoidable in connection with the movements of a field force.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that parcels sent out in November had not been delivered by the end of February?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am not aware of that fact, but I do not know whether my hon. friend knows the magnitude of the task of delivery. I may mention that I yesterday received a private letter from Mr. Gatliff, dated January 31, and he tells me that, though he is working voluntarily, he has five clerks and fifteen other men working under him, and that he had dispatched 40,000 parcels to the front up to the end of January.

RE-ENGAGEMENT OF RESERVISTS.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for

War whether a man who is accepted for service in a reserve battalion will be allowed on the expiry of his twelve months service to re-engage into the Regular Army, holding the same rank as he had in the reserve battalion, and conditions as to age.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reply is in the negative; but exception may be made when it is considered that the service would benefit. The question of policy has been discussed in recent debates.

DEPUTY JUDGE ADVOCATES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. H. D. GREENE (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what provision has been made for the attendance of Deputy Judge Advocates in South Africa, and whether there is a sufficient number of them to secure due administration of military law; and whether the labours of the Judge Advocate General's Department have been at all increased by the additions to Her Majesty's forces.

MR. WYNDHAM: A Deputy Judge Advocate, Colonel St. Clair, is supervising the administration of military law in South Africa, and is assisted by a barrister. This staff is considered sufficient. The labours of the department at home have been considerably increased owing to the number of troops called out.

TRANSPORT—THE "DUNERA"

MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what has caused the delay in the departure of the "Dunera" with the Grenadier Guards for South Africa; and whether he can state definitely on what day the steamer will leave Southampton.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): Perhaps I may reply to this question. The "Dunera" was coaled at Port Talbot, Cardiff, and was neaped for three days. She will sail on the 18th instant from Southampton.

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.

MR. HOWELL (Denbigh Boroughs): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether he is aware that Edwin Underwood, one of the three directors of

Underwood and Sons, Limited, who have recently, and for the second time, been struck off the list of contractors to the War Office for supplying defective stores under contracts, is a justice of the peace for the county of Middlesex; and whether the Lord Chancellor proposes to call upon Mr. Underwood for an explanation of his conduct in this matter.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I am not aware whether the facts are as stated in the first part of the question, but if they are, the Lord Chancellor will certainly take action.

MR. HOWELL: Are inquiries being made?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The question only appeared on the Paper to-day, and there has been no time to make inquiries. I could only communicate with the Lord Chancellor.

COLCHESTER RIFLE RANGE.

MR. F. W. WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if £39,000 has been expended on the Colchester Rifle Range, which is still unopened on account of legal obstacles; and whether he contemplates an alteration of the law providing for the easier acquisition of land, and closing of bye-roads and footpaths during time of firing, so that Volunteer corps and local authorities may be able to obtain rifle ranges on better terms than has been the case at Colchester.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The total expenditure on Colchester rifle range amounts to £50,000. There are still difficulties in regard to the bye-laws, but every effort is being made to get them settled and the ranges open for use. The state of the law with regard to Volunteer ranges is under consideration.

THE TEETH OF ARMY RECRUITS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, seeing that the First Lord of the Admiralty recently stated that fully 25 per cent. of the recruits for the Navy are rejected on account of bad teeth, will he state what percentage of the recruits for the Army were rejected for this cause during the year ending 31st December, 1899.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The percentage was 7·74 of the total number rejected—2·5 of the total number presenting themselves.

H.M.S. "HERMES"—DEFECTIVE MACHINERY.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what was the nature of the breakdown of machinery of H.M.S. "Hermes," necessitating her being towed into Kingston, Jamaica; and how long was she towed.

*MR. MACARTNEY: The telegraphic report which has been received does not state the cause of the breakdown, but defects are reported in the feed pump and springs, drain pipe joints of main steam pipes, and safety and non-return valves and boiler mountings. She was towed from Nassau to Port Royal.

ARAB ATTACKS ON BRITISH INDIAN PILGRIMS.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he is now able to report the result of the representations made to the Sublime Porte by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople respecting the claims of British Indian pilgrims who were robbed and wounded by Arab brigands on the highway between Jeddah and Mecca in the years 1895, 1896, 1897, and 1898.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The total claim of British Indian pilgrims for losses by robbery in the Hedjez during the years 1892—1898, appears to have been about £2,500, but an arrangement was arrived at between the Vali and the claimants by which half this sum was to be accepted, provided the matter was promptly settled. The settlement of the claims on this basis was reported by the Acting British Consul at Jeddah to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the 20th of September last.

SIAM—BANKOK-KHORAT RAILWAY CONTRACT.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can inform the House

whether any, and if so, what award has been given by the counsel to whom the long-standing dispute about an English firm's ejection by the Siamese Government from the Bangkok-Khorat railway contract was last year submitted for arbitration.

*MR. BRODRICK: The reference to counsel was arranged between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Siam, but Her Majesty's Government were not parties to it, and the award has not been communicated to us by either side. I understand, however, that an award has been made, and that it is in favour of the British contractor for the railway.

THE WAIMA INCIDENT.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government of the Republic of France has admitted that the killing of British officers at Waima is a fair subject for arbitration between that Government and the United Kingdom; whether the Government have asked the French Government to agree to arbitration; what progress has been made in the negotiations on the matter; and whether he will lay the correspondence on the matter between the two Governments upon the Table of the House.

*MR. BRODRICK: The French Government have recognised the principle of arbitration, and the details are now under discussion with the French Government. Correspondence cannot be laid until an agreement has been arrived at.

VENEZUELAN ARBITRATION—INCIDENT OF COST.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can now state the total British costs arising out of the Venezuelan Arbitration, and whether it is proposed that these costs should be defrayed or reimbursed by British Guiana.

*MR. BRODRICK: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this. The expenses incurred between 1895 and the present date amount to £65,625. There has never been any proposal that British Guiana should defray any part of the costs.

MILK ADULTERATION.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether his attention has been called to the report of the public analyst to the Vestry of Paddington for the quarter ending 25th December, 1899, wherein it appears that the magistrate at Marylebone Police Court, in the case of a sample of butter containing 65 per cent. of margarine, imposed no fine but only costs of 12s. 6d., and gave the same decision in another case where the sample contained 80 per cent. of margarine, and in another case, where the so-called butter was entirely margarine, imposed a fine of 10s. and 12s. 6d. costs; also in two other cases where a farmer had sent to the railway station two churns of milk from which half the cream was deficient, the summons was dismissed on the explanation that the milk from which these samples was taken was received at the farm dairy on the evening of each day, mixed in a large container and left for the night, and that next day the churns were filled for transmission to London by means of a tap at the bottom of the container, no previous stirring up of the contents of the container taking place; whether it would be possible to issue a circular or otherwise to instruct magistrates having jurisdiction in such cases, that when milk is left undisturbed the cream rises to the top, and hence the lower part of the milk does not contain its share of cream, which it should be considered has been removed from it, and that such milk is to be dealt with as adulterated; whether his attention has been further called to the fact that practically the same percentage of milk purchased at railway stations is adulterated as of milk purchased in town, thus showing it is not the retailer who is alone to blame; and whether it is possible in any way to assist local authorities who are doing all in their power and expending large amounts of money in endeavouring to carry out the law so as to protect the humbler consumers, and who thus find their efforts discouraged.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): I have seen the report to which my hon. and gallant friend refers, but the information at present at our dis-

posal would scarcely justify the adoption of the course suggested. Our inspectors are, however, closely watching the administration of the Acts, in consultation with the local authorities concerned, and the representations of my hon. and gallant friend will be kept in view. I could not take upon myself to express an opinion as to the respective culpability of producers and retailers of milk so far as adulteration is concerned.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Were the proceedings referred to taken under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act of last year?

*MR. LONG: I cannot possibly answer that question without inquiry. I know nothing of the proceedings which were taken.

DEATH CERTIFICATES.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether his attention has been called to the frequency of complaints in coroners' courts respecting the signature and filling up of death certificates; and whether he will bring in a Bill to amend the law of death certification, as recommended by the Select Committee of 1893.

THE SECRETARY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): Yes, Sir; complaints have been made of the kind referred to. The question is being considered, but I am afraid no undertaking such as that asked for by the hon. Member, to bring in a Bill during this session, can be given.

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 FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS BILL—
 DOUBLE-SHIFT SYSTEM.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department to what trade or trades he contemplates extending the double-shift clause of his Factories and Workshops Bill.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The only trade in which I think a case—a *prima facie* case—has yet been made for the introduction of the double-shift system is the making of ammunition. An application has also been received from the trade of pneumatic tyre making.

Both these cases will, of course, be investigated further if Parliament grants me the proposed power. I should like to point out that the system is represented to have a double advantage. It will give the workpeople shorter hours and longer intervals for rest in trying occupations, and it will enable the employer to increase his output. It is possible that similar applications will be received from other trades also, but in no case will the system be allowed except after full investigation and under such stringent conditions as may be necessary to prevent abuse.

RAILWAY EXTENSION TO MALLAIG.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state whether there is any prospect of the railway extension to Mallaig being completed by June next.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. RITCHIE, Croydon): No, Sir. I am informed by the company that although in their own interest they are anxious to complete and open this extension at the earliest possible date, progress, from various causes, has necessarily been slow, and it is not thought that the line can be ready for opening before October next.

SCOTTISH ROYAL LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland has received memorials from certain parish councils in Scotland urging that parish councils should be represented on the boards of royal lunatic asylums, and that there should be a public audit of the accounts of these boards; and will he state what action it is proposed to take in the matter.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The memorials referred to were received, and the Secretary for Scotland met a deputation, on which occasion the whole subject was fully discussed. To give effect to the proposals made in the question would require legislation, which it is not intended to propose at present.

SCOTTISH FISHERY HARBOURS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will explain why the sum

of £4,847 was surrendered out of the Vote for the Fishery Board for Scotland for the year ended 31st March, 1898, seeing that there are so many places around the coast of Scotland in need of harbour accommodation; and, in view of the damage done to fishing boats at Avoch, Ross-shire, during the storm of the 18th February last, owing to the want of harbour accommodation, will the Secretary for Scotland state the cost of a harbour at that place, and consider the expediency of providing the requisite grant out of Fishery Board funds.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: For a detailed answer to the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question I must ask him to follow up his researches in the Appropriation Accounts by a reference to the Estimates of 1898-99, where he will find that the necessary provision for the services included within the amount surrendered were duly provided for under their respective heads. The sum of £4,847 consisted largely of money voted for building a Fishery Board cruiser which, from the exigencies of the ship-building industry, could not be all spent within the financial year, and, as the hon. Member must be aware, could not be spent except on the specific purpose for which it was voted. No exact estimate of the cost of a harbour at Avoch has been made, but as I have already informed the hon. Member, it would involve a large expenditure, and the Secretary for Scotland is not at present prepared to recommend a grant in aid.

SCOTTISH LUNATIC ASYLUMS—PRIVATE PATIENTS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if his attention has been called to the recommendations contained in the Forty-first Annual Report of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland, to the effect that measures should be taken to give District Lunacy Boards permissive powers to provide accommodation for the poorer class of private patients; and will he say what action it is proposed to take in the matter.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The answer to the first paragraph of the question is in the affirmative. The Secretary for Scotland does not propose to take any action at present.

SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD—ROAD MAKING.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland is aware that, at a recent meeting of crofters and fishermen of Carloway, resolutions were unanimously carried urging that the Congested Districts Board should make provision for the construction of the middle section of the road between Carloway and Stornoway; and will he state what action it is proposed to take in the matter.

***MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY:** The resolutions in question have been duly received, and will receive consideration from the Congested Districts Board in due course.

IRISH RAILWAYS — WATERFORD-ROSSLARE LINE — CORK - FERMOY LINE.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Great Southern and Western Railway and the Great Western Railway have begun the construction of the line sanctioned by Parliament from Waterford to Rosslare; and, if so, how many men are at present employed on the works.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg at the same time to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Great Southern and Western Railway and the Great Western Railway Companies have begun the construction of the line sanctioned by Parliament from Cork to Fermoy; and, if not, when it is intended to make a commencement.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): I understand that a contract has been made for the construction of twenty-one miles of the line from Waterford to Rosslare, but that the work has not actually been begun. No steps have been taken with regard to the line from Cork to Fermoy, and I gather that priority will probably be given to the other line. The delay is attributable to alterations in the plans, and to the necessity for obtaining fresh Parliamentary powers. The terms of the Treasury Agreement are that when half of the works upon each of the sections—not half the works on the whole line—have been completed, a sum of £50,000 shall be paid to the Fishguard Company, and that

when the remaining works have been completed a further sum of £43,000 shall be paid. These undertakings are, in my opinion, contingent upon the fulfilment of the whole bargain described in the agreement in which the completion of both lines within the five years named in the Act is an essential portion, and I consider it very desirable in the public interest that there should be no undue delay.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): May I ask whether it is not now nearly two years ago since this Act was passed, and whether during the session before last the general manager of the Great Western Railway Company, in his evidence before the Hybrid Committee, did not state that, if the Bill there under consideration was passed, the following September—that was last September twelvemonths—would see 50,000 men engaged in the making of the line.

MR. HANBURY: It is a fact that the Bill was passed nearly two years ago, but last year a fresh Bill had to be introduced in consequence of a number of engineering difficulties in the way of the line as it was originally proposed. So far as I am concerned I shall do all in my power to get the line completed.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Of course, the hon. Gentleman knows that the cause for the delay about the Cork portion of the line does not apply to the Rosslare portion. Cannot steps be taken to see that the work is at once begun, because if that is not quickly done it will be impossible to complete it within the five years limit.

MR. HANBURY: I do not think the Treasury has any power to enforce the commencement of the construction of the line by a particular date. What we have power to do is to see that it is completed by such a date.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Can the right hon. Gentleman give us the date of the contract and the name of the contractor?

MR. HANBURY: The contract for the twenty-one miles was only made about a fortnight ago.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Who is the contractor?

[No answer was given.]

DEPORTATION OF IRISH PAUPERS BILL.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state how soon the Bill promised during the debate on the Queen's Speech dealing with the deportation of paupers into Ireland will be introduced by the Government.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Bill has been prepared, and will shortly be introduced.

MR. FLAVIN: Can the hon. Gentleman give any definite date? Will it be introduced before Easter?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I hope so.

FATALITY ON THE CASTLEDERG AND VICTORIA TRAMWAY LINE.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade can he make any statement in regard to the allegation that two brothers, named Campbell, were run over and killed by the Castlederg and Victoria tramway train on Saturday night last between Victoria and Castlederg; and will he cause an inquiry to be made into this matter.

MR. RITCHIE: The Board of Trade have received an intimation of this accident from the company, but the cause of it is not explained. The coroner's inquiry will, no doubt, throw light on the subject, and I shall obtain a report of the proceedings.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.W.): May I ask the First Lord whether he will report progress to-night to allow of reasonable time for the discussion of the Report of Supply?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I had hoped yesterday that Report of Supply would be reached by a reasonable hour, but, as the House is aware, a considerable amount of time was expended on the debate on the motion for adjournment, and that rather upsets my calculations. As regards to-day, I would remind my right hon. friend that all time cut off from Supply is an injury to those who desire to discuss the Estimates. Perhaps, however, he will allow me to see what progress we make before I come to a conclusion.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: If the right hon. Gentleman cannot give adequate time to the Report stage to-night, will he put it off?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR was understood to assent.

RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH—DISTURBANCES DIRECTED AGAINST OPPOSITIONS OF THE WAR—WAKEFIELD RIOTS.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the Home Secretary a question of which I have given him private notice—whether he has received any report relative to an alleged riot at Wakefield last night, in which a company of Wycliffe preachers are stated to have been attacked by the mob, one of them struck in the face, another knocked down and rolled in the mud, and all of them compelled to fly for refuge from a shower of missiles; and whether if this is so he will satisfy himself that the police afforded efficient and sufficient protection to these preachers?

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I have heard nothing of the alleged riots, but if the hon. Baronet says that there has been anything of the sort, I will, of course, make inquiries.

ELECTORAL DISABILITIES (MILITARY SERVICE) BILL.

As amended, in the Committee, to be printed. [Bill 130.]

NEW BILLS.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Cornwallis, Dr. Rentoul, and Mr. Tomlinson.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 9th May, and to be printed. [Bill 131.]

FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENTS.

Bill to amend the Law relating to Fisheries in Ireland, ordered to be

brought in by Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Cornwallis, Dr. Rentoul, and Mr. Tomlinson.

FISHERIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Fisheries in Ireland," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 9th May, and to be printed. [Bill 132.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND).

Bill to prohibit the sale or supply of exciseable Liquors to Children in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Baird, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Hozier, Mr. McKillop, and Mr. Orr Ewing.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To prohibit the sale or supply of exciseable Liquors to Children in Scotland," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 133.]

TRUST FUNDS.

Bill to authorise the Investment of Trust Funds on the security of Local Rates, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lloyd-George, Sir Walter Foster, Sir James Woodhouse, Colonel Milward, Mr. A. K. Loyd, Mr. Robson, Mr. Warr, and Mr. Nussey.

TRUST FUNDS BILL.

"To authorise the Investment of Trust Funds on the security of Local Rates," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 134.]

SUPPLY [4TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £555,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to

defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of the Medical Establishment, and for Medicines, etc., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said that some critics had brought the War Office under review as to the conduct of operations in South Africa, and some had reviewed the Generals in the field; but he maintained that not a single word of censure had been directed against the Department for which this Vote was asked. The Army Medical Department had been the real success of the war. The more we heard and the more we read the reports from high authoritative sources, giving an account of what had been done at the front, the more we were filled with admiration for the pluck, devotion, and skill which had been displayed, and the hard work carried on by the officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps under actual danger and peril, resulting in many cases in sad loss of life. When we considered the work they had been called upon to perform, our admiration was increased. At Ladysmith alone there were 800 cases of typhoid fever, and when we considered the results of the treatment of these, and of the wounded, amounting to 95 per cent. of cures, we were still further struck by the admirable skill of the officers of the corps. Two or three factors should be taken into consideration in regard to these satisfactory results. The Mauser bullet was a swift and humane missile. It had not the smashing properties of some expanding bullets. From a medical point of view he could not do other than refer in terms of severe condemnation of the Boers for using soft-nosed bullets, the wounds from which, if he were to give details, would simply appal the Committee. The wounds caused by that description of bullet were filled with sand and pebbles and every kind of external abomination, which rendered the treatment of the wounds almost impossible. The hospitals had been well found, the organisation excellent, and the nursing complete. Every convenience of modern science had been provided, and he wished to render his tribute of admiration to the War Office for the way in which they had performed that part of their duty. A very interesting report had appeared in

the *British Medical Journal* two or three weeks ago, by Mr. Treves, the eminent surgeon, who gave a well-earned tribute to the heroism of the British soldier. We had heard a great deal of the heroism of the troops in the attacks on Spion Kopje, and other places, where their endurance and pluck were sorely tried. It was one thing to do these deeds of daring in moments of excitement in battle, but when the poor fellows were brought back sorely wounded, possibly maimed for life, their patient endurance was marvellous, and still further excited admiration. Mr. Treves said, in his report—

“In spite of all their hardships the wounded men behaved as splendidly as they have always done. They never complained. They were quite touching in their unselfishness, and in their anxiety ‘not to give trouble.’ The English soldier is a man of whom the country may well be proud, and in these two terrible engagements on the Tugela they behaved from first to last in a manner worthy of the splendid traditions of the British Army. A finer, harder, and more heroic set of men could hardly have been gathered together. They were very much depressed at the reverse.”

Then Mr. Treves went on to give an account of a poor fellow shot in the face by a piece of shell, in a way which he would not like to describe to the House.

“He had been lying hours on the hill. He was unable to speak, and as soon as he was landed at the hospital he made signs that he wanted to write. Pencil and paper were given him, and it was supposed he wished to ask for something; but he merely wrote, ‘Did we win?’ No one had the heart to tell him the truth.”

Reports had been received from the surgeons in the field explaining how the new system for the Royal Army Medical Corps, organised a few years ago, had worked in the field. It was found that the definite rank given to the officers of the corps was a great boon. Having to take command of large bodies of men, it was formerly found that without rank they could not carry on their work effectually. Things now, however, worked admirably and smoothly, and he hoped to hear from the Under Secretary that the medical schools had carried out the pledge which they gave some years ago to Lord Lansdowne to provide a full and continuous flow of good candidates to fill up the ranks in the service. His information was, that although the number of recruits had not been so very great, yet there was

Dr. Farquharson.

a fair competition of first-class men, and that the Department would now get practically a sufficient number of officers to carry on the work. He hoped that the War Office would afford opportunity to medical officers coming home from service abroad to attend medical schools, where they could rub off the rust which they had acquired during their service abroad. He maintained that the Medical Department was still undermanned. There had been an increase in the Army of 2,000 Engineers, seven batteries of Royal Horse Artillery, thirty-six field batteries, and twelve Line battalions, and the increase of medical officers for all this great number of men was only six. That was not enough. We ought not, in his opinion, to rely on the hand to mouth system of employing civilian practitioners who really did not understand the soldier and his ways. One result, he believed, of employing civilians was that a large number of bad recruits had been passed, both for the Militia and Reserve forces, and sent out to South Africa, from which they were sent back again. No doubt, at a time of stress and strain and emergency like the present, it was necessary to engage some civil practitioners, and while it was quite right to have such men as Sir W. MacCormac and Mr. Treves giving the Army Medical Staff the benefit of their consultations, still the poor medical officer living on 10s. a day must look with an envious eye on the large salaries given to the distinguished surgeons. Probably one day, before long—and he did not see why it should not be done now—if the number of candidates for admission to the Royal Army Medical Corps did not increase, it would be necessary to increase the rate of pay in that Department. In the case of the ordinary recruit we had to compete with the ordinary labour market, and in the case of the medical recruit we had to compete with the medical market. There were now better opportunities and facilities for the practice of the profession in civil life, and he did not know that we would be able much longer to get a stock of excellent and efficient candidates on the present somewhat meagre pittance paid to men who had gone through six years of a laborious and expensive curriculum. He was not quite satisfied with the answer given about the ambulances the other day. On reading the remarks from the surgeons in the field it seemed

to him that we ought to have another class of wagon. He hoped the Department would take into serious consideration whether we could not take a lesson on this point, as well as on many others, from the campaign we were passing through. It would not be at all a bad idea to cut down some of the excessive demands made on the Army Medical Department in connection with the medical examination. We got men from the medical schools, and he did not see the object of examining them all along the line of medical study. The candidate should be examined on matters relating to military surgery and the emergencies of the service in which he would be afterwards engaged. The hon. Gentleman expressed his admiration of the skill, heroism, and devotion with which the Medical Department had carried out their work during this war.

Mr. PRICE (Norfolk, E.) associated himself with his hon. and scientific friend in his praise of the medical staff during the war. He had good reason privately for knowing that the accounts which had appeared in the newspapers were not overstated. The medical service had done honour to itself and the country. On one or two occasions he had prognosticated rather evil things for the medical service if it was put to any great strain. There had been for many years difficulty in filling up the number required for the medical service in the Army, and although various methods had been tried to increase the candidates, and presumably to raise the standard, those measures up to now had failed. He was glad to hear from the hon. Gentleman who had spoken just now that there had been more competition recently for admission into the medical ranks of the Army. At the same time it was perfectly obvious that unless something was done very soon to meet the views of the medical officers of the Army, we could only expect things to go from bad to worse, because at the present moment one of the things that stopped a medical man from going into the medical service was the enormous amount of foreign service they had to undertake during their career, and the smaller the number we had of military medical men, the larger the number of civilians we had to employ, the more would necessarily be the foreign service of those who did join the Army Medical Corps. He had some

difficulty in discussing this Medical Vote because we had not had the benefit of seeing a Medical Report since that of 1897. It was not a satisfactory state of things that this Vote should come up for discussion in a House which had not had a Report since 1897. These Reports had always been very late, and it was extremely difficult, of course, to discuss general questions in connection with the Army medical service unless the Reports were better up to date than that. The Report of 1897 was an extremely interesting one. There were several experiments being tried, and it was essential to ascertain how those experiments had been carried out. He had reason to believe, from articles that had appeared in the *British Medical Journal*, that the experiments had been most successful. It was a matter of the greatest importance to the Army that these questions should be properly dealt with in the most scientific manner.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) said he should like to ask some information as to the medical condition of the troops sent to the front. His hon. friend had referred to the condition in which the troops arrived at Cape Town. He had in his hand an extract from an article which appeared in one of the medical journals, and that article made statements which, if they were facts, were really very serious. It was from the special correspondent at Cape Town of the *British Medical Journal*. He stated that a great number of the troops arriving there ought never to have been despatched, and that after spending a time in the hospital there they had to be returned to this country. The writer said—

"It is perfectly true that the average Reservist is a better developed man than his comrade with the colours, but it is unfortunately true that both Reservists and Militiamen contain a very large number of "lame ducks," hopelessly incapable of going to the front. This is not the case to any appreciable extent with the colours men, who are obviously under such continual observation as to render it very unlikely that any obviously unfit men could be drafted for foreign service. But the percentage of others who are being landed here, and sent to the station hospital with the immediate result of being marked for redrafting to England, is far greater than would have been the case had an efficient system of inspection been adopted on your side. I am inclined to connect the number of lame ducks with the deficient personnel of the R.A.M.C. From the object lessons one is seeing here it is quite evident that the examinations at home have been conducted either by men who do not understand

military requirements, or by men who were so pressed for time that they had to run through the work at a speed which does not permit thorough investigation. On no other supposition could one explain the fact that cases of distinct phthisis, of renal disease, of well marked tertiary syphilis, of ulcer of leg, of large varicose veins, of varicocele, of inguinal hernia (old), of chronic gonorrhœa, of pretty distinct valvular disease of the heart, and similar ailments have been landed here, and can only be sent back again; and this not in ones or twos, but in a very fair proportion."

That pointed to an imperfection in the arrangements in connection with the medical examination of the troops sent out, and he thought the time had come for a change of procedure in that matter. Another subject which called for attention was the report that on board transports adequate arrangements had not been made by which men suffering from infectious diseases could be separated from the rest. That was indeed a painful matter, and as it had been adverted to in a prominent medical journal it ought to receive some attention.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said the facts mentioned by the hon. Member constituted one of the most serious charges which had been made with reference to the efficiency of the medical examination of the troops. The number of invalids arriving for whom accommodation had to be provided had become so great that a pavilion or temporary building had had to be put up in order to receive the decrepit persons sent out to South Africa for active service. There was no doubt whatever of the fact that a large number of cases of chronic disease had been sent out to South Africa, and these ought to have been recognised at home. These men had become a burden rather than an aid to the Army. He wished to know whether the Under Secretary would inquire into this matter. The Royal Army Medical Corps had done their duty splendidly, and shown great courage and devotion, but it had notoriously been weakened in numbers in recent years, and the pick of the corps having been sent to South Africa, it was necessary to supplement those left at home by civilians. It was possible that the errors that had been made in sending men to South Africa who were not physically fit for duty might be due not to the Royal Army Medical Corps but to the temporary civilian substitutes who

Mr. Arnold-Forster.

had examined them before passing them as fit for foreign service. It was desirable to have a stronger Army Medical Corps than we had, and he regretted that a larger increase was not contemplated than that proposed. We wanted a larger number of men, and if there was any difficulty in getting them we should offer greater inducements to men to join the service. We had given them what was required so far as rank was concerned, and we should probably have to give them an increase of pay. There had been in this respect a somewhat lavish generosity, if he might put it in those terms, on the part of the War Office with reference to the civilian officers who had gone to do duty at the front. The War Office did very good service in sending out the two distinguished surgeons who first proceeded to help their army medical brethren in the care of the wounded. It was a very fine piece of work to send Sir William MacCormac and Mr. Treves to the front. Reports had reached us of the valuable services they had done, but it was not necessary that every consulting surgeon sent to the front should be treated as the most distinguished gentleman in the profession. He wished to know whether it was a fact that one of those distinguished surgeons wished to take an assistant out with him, and that the War Office, in agreeing to this, rated the assistant at the same rate as his principal, giving him £5,000 a year. When a man was taken out as an assistant by a senior it was wrong to give a salary absolutely unnecessary and extravagant to the gentleman selected for the purpose. By all means let us select the best men we could get and pay them handsomely, but if the War Office could not make a difference in such a case as this, and proceeded on the old red tape system of which the Department had been accused, there was not a proper use of the public funds of the country in this particular matter. He also called attention to the great prevalence which had been noticed, and especially at Ladysmith, of typhoid fever. He thought that in the debates last year it was pointed out that Ladysmith was not a healthy place, that it was likely to be ravaged more or less by fever, and that its water was not altogether satisfactory. These criticisms had been amply verified by the terrible experience we had had in that beleaguered position. That was a condition of things which

would have been avoided if a larger amount of care had been taken in selecting Ladysmith as a place for the collection of supplies. Similar conditions had been going on in various camps in connection with the operations on the Modder River and other places, and he hoped that the War Office would see that attention was paid not only to the surgical aspects of the war, but also to the sanitary aspects of the administration of the Army Medical Department. The responsibility was thrown upon them not only of selecting suitable stations for occupation by the troops, but also of taking all the precautions which were requisite with the view of stamping out disease. These diseases were nearly all preventable, and the most vigorous efforts should be taken to prevent enteric fever, which had prevailed among the troops. He believed our ambulances had not been found to be as useful as the ambulances of our enemies, who had lighter carts. He was told by people of great experience in these matters that we made a great mistake in having our ambulance wagons too heavy. The rule that ought to be followed was to have the lightest possible wagon for the roughest country, but that was a rule on which we had not proceeded in the building of ambulance carts. He hoped that, whatever might be the outcome of the criticisms now offered, one effect of the debate would be a greater number of candidates for the Royal Army Medical Service. The last examination for the Royal Army Medical Corps was not so satisfactory as it should have been in regard to the number of applicants, and he hoped the medical schools throughout the country would take this matter up. He thought that a modification of the examination such as his hon. friend suggested might be useful. We ought to have the examination more in a special direction, and not in a general direction. That, if followed up, as it was usually, under present conditions, with experience at Netley six months before the men were attached to any barracks or medical service, would give the complete medical education necessary. We should give inducements to the highest class of men who entered the profession to enter the Army. It was an object of ambition which ought to attract the highest class of men, for it was a service not only carrying out the beneficent aims of the

profession generally, but when the suffering was incurred for their country's sake.

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) said the system by which the Army Medical Department was separated from the regiment had failed in some respects. They had behaved admirably in the Egyptian campaign, and also in this, yet when they were at home there was a severance between the services which ought not to exist. He wished to impress on the Under Secretary that a medical officer should be attached to a regiment for a certain period of time, and in the Army List the regiment to which he was attached should be notified, to show whether he had served with a mounted corps or not. He sincerely trusted that much consideration would be given to this subject, for he felt sure that it would have a very marked effect upon getting young gentlemen to join the Medical Corps.

MR. WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) asked whether any statistics could be given as to the number of deaths of those who had been inoculated by toxin against typhoid fever.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) drew attention to the delay that had occurred in the payments to the wives of the men who had been called out. There had been considerable delay in the paymasters' department, and he concluded that must have been caused by some fault on the part of the paymasters. He wished the Under Secretary to give particular attention to this point, and to see that this department of the War Office was not in future so remiss as it had been.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): We all know how keen an interest the hon. Member for South-west Manchester has taken in this question of payments to the wives of Reservists. In reply to the hon. Member, I wish to make it quite clear that the charge is not against the Army Medical Department at all, but against the paymasters. The delay complained of has not been due to any fault on the part of the paymasters, but to the fact that under the present system of various districts the Army

Medical Corps is located for this purpose in the Home District of the other corps, and, therefore, the paymasters of one district have much more work to do on such an occasion as the present than the paymasters of other districts. It is a case of the weakest link in the chain; but it is a question whether the different departments ought not to be strengthened in that and similar districts, owing to the greater pressure put upon them when mobilisation takes place. It is true that the Committee cannot pay too high a tribute to the fortitude, courage, and efficiency of the medical officers which have been displayed. They were not exalted by the joy and intoxication of battle; they were sustained alone by their devotion to suffering humanity, and this rendered their services, in my opinion, all the more heroic. The medical schools, in supplying candidates, had fulfilled their part of the bargain, to which the Department was the other party. The result has been, I hope, satisfactory to them, as it has been to the Army; but the Department does not reap the whole results of such a change in the first or second year. The next point raised was that the present numbers of the Royal Army Medical Corps were not adequate to the size of the Army. We may expect that the inducements which have been offered will, in the course of the next few years, give us numbers even more satisfactory than those which have been forthcoming recently. It would be impossible to keep up at all times an establishment of the Royal Army Medical Corps which would be adequate to a time when we were mobilising the whole of the Army for an expedition. Before the war we had 107,000 Regular troops in this country; at this moment we have, or will have very soon, 180,000 troops in South Africa alone, who have to look for assistance either to the Army Medical Corps or to the civilian doctors who have been given salaries. In addition there are 100,000 troops in this country, and if the Army Medical Corps were to be sufficient to deal with the present number, it would have to be three times as large as would be necessary one year in twenty—certainly one year in ten. Reference has been made to the great services of Sir William MacCormac and Mr. Treves, but I am very sorry that the opinion was expressed by some hon. Gentlemen that the services of the other five

consulting surgeons had been too generously recognised. A surgeon, of the standing these gentlemen have achieved, who goes out to South Africa, not only risks his life, but makes a great financial sacrifice. His income is to be told in thousands, and to leave a *clientèle* of that size in order to proceed to South Africa, with the possibility of not returning for five, six, or seven months, is really, in addition to the personal sacrifice, making a present of £5,000 or £6,000, or perhaps £10,000, to the taxpayers of this country. Therefore I do not think that £5,000 a year is a shilling too much to pay for the war services of these gentlemen. Then my hon. friend suggested that we should offer such inducements to the Royal Army Medical Corps as would enable us to obtain the heads of the medical profession. Why, we should like for the fighting branches of the service to be given a call on the ablest brains in this country, but when they command anything from £5,000 to £50,000 in the market we cannot have them in any profusion. We are, however, anxious to secure the best we can, and we hope, with respect to the Army Medical Corps, as with respect to every other branch of the service, that gradually we may be able to improve the conditions under which the men serve, and thereby secure the best material within our reach. The hon. Members for West Belfast and East Norfolk drew my attention to some reports in the *British Medical Journal*, in which it is alleged that a number of men had been landed in South Africa who were at once invalided home or sent into hospital. We ought to be given an opportunity to examine into these allegations, as they deserve and shall receive examination, but I think the passage quoted by my hon. friend points exclusively to reservists and militiamen. Do not let it go abroad that there has been a great amount of sickness in South Africa. There is no comparison between this expedition and any other expedition of which we have any record in this or any other country. The percentage of sickness has been far lower than in any other case of which we have any record, but in respect of particular corps there have been some preventable cases. By all means let us examine into them, but do not let us do it in such a way as to create an erroneous impression in the outside world. As the hon. Baronet has

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said, it may be that some civilian practitioners have not their eyes trained to detect certain chronic complaints which are injurious to the soldier. That may be so, but I think I have proved that when we are despatching a force of the size now in South Africa we must bring to our aid a certain amount—indeed a great amount—of civilian assistance, and it may be that the special attention usually paid has not been paid to those chronic complaints with which military officers are now acquainted in their bearing on soldiers. As to Ladysmith, I did not quite follow the argument of the hon. Baronet. It is quite true that enteric fever was prevalent in Ladysmith, and the hon. Baronet says it was also prevalent in other camps. It is so in every camp where men are encamped for a lengthy period on one spot. But the Royal Army Medical Corps have made an enormous advance in sanitary matters in recent years. Great attention has been bestowed upon the conditions which enable us to fight with this disease, and, taking it all round, I believe that the amount of enteric fever in this campaign is very much lower than it was, for instance, in the Soudan. That I attribute partly, no doubt, to the climate in South Africa, but also largely to the progress made in the sanitation of camps. As to inoculation, the first experiments did not cover any great number of men, and I think the Committee will agree with me that what we have done is prudent, namely, to wait for the experience of the campaign generally before drawing up statistics. That applies also to the Medical Report. My hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Ince Division invited us to return to the system of each regiment having its own doctor. There is much to be said for it. Anyone who has served in a regiment with its own doctor knows what a friend and counsellor he becomes to officers and men, but I do not know that I can hold out any hope that that will be done, even in the modified form advocated by my hon. and gallant friend, in the immediate future. I doubt whether it is possible. The Royal Army Medical Corps is treated as a part of the Army, and it must stand on all fours with the Royal Engineers or any other branch of the service.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: I am very glad to have heard the words of the hon.

Gentleman in reference to the services rendered by the Army Medical Corps, and they will be welcomed by every member of that distinguished body. With reference to the distinguished surgeons sent out to South Africa, I do not think £5,000 is an excessive salary. I agree with every word which the hon. Gentleman has said as to that, with this exception, that when one of these gentlemen took an assistant with him the assistant was placed on the same rank as himself. That was unnecessary generosity on the part of the War Office, and if followed generally it is likely to lead to the abuse of the whole system. That is the point I wish to press on the attention of the War Office. It was an unnecessary step to place all these surgeons on the same rank, when they had not the same rank either in the profession or in the hospitals with which they were connected. It was placing juniors on a level with seniors, and putting the country to unnecessary expense. Some of the surgeons were, among other duties, to report on the organisation of the hospitals, and I wish to know whether these Reports will be published as Parliamentary Papers.

MR. WYNDHAM: In all probability; but I cannot give a definite undertaking.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): The Army Medical Corps has been strengthened, and very materially helped by the great self-sacrifice and devotion of the members of local ambulance corps who have volunteered. In my own county, where these ambulance corps are very strong, the members have volunteered, and have taken dangerous and difficult service at the front, or are rendering service in tending the wounded on the way home. I wish to place on record the appreciation, which I am sure the Committee feel, of the self-sacrifice and devotion of these men.

MR. WYNDHAM: And with them we must couple the nursing sisters.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): The question which I desire to raise comes, I think, within the province of the Financial Secretary to the War Office. It is the question of the supply of medical stores to the Army. I do not wish to anticipate any discussion which may be raised on a specific Vote with

reference to complaints as to Army stores, but I apprehend that the system, or want of system, by which defective stores are passed by officers whose duty it is to guard against fraud, cannot have a more serious result than in the Medical Department. A large sum is included in this Vote for medical stores, and I should like to ask what precautions are taken with regard to them to prevent fraudulent transactions such as have recently been brought before the public. I am bound to say that the complaints I have heard with respect to the medical stores arose from their being kept too long in stock before use, which I think is unavoidable. When stores have to be laid by in advance in large quantities, it is almost impossible in some instances to prevent their efficacy being impaired. It is to a much more serious question, however, that I wish to direct attention. What are the precautions taken by the Government to prevent defective medical stores being palmed off by contractors? What the War Office chiefly relies on is the terrible penalty of striking such contractors off the Government list. That is of course a very proper penalty with which to visit all those guilty of the serious crime of not only committing deliberate fraud but of rendering the efficiency of Her Majesty's service in war ineffective. But that is a penalty which is viewed with equanimity by contractors. Only the other day a case was mentioned in this House in which a contractor who had been caught red-handed and struck off the list for malpractice reappeared under a new name and was able to continue to perpetrate the fraud of which he had been already convicted. I do not blame the Financial Secretary to the War Office, whose sense of public duty would prompt him to do his utmost to guard against any illegalities of any kind; but I do not hesitate to say that among subordinate officials there is a deliberate attempt to screen these offenders and to hush up flagrant and glaring scandals. I asked for a Return showing the Christian names, surnames, and addresses of all contractors, including partners in firms and directors of companies, struck off the Government list in connection with the supply of defective stores used by Her Majesty's forces during the current financial year, the names and rank of the officers responsible for the acceptance of such defective

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stores, and the description of the said stores. My hon. friend would not give me that Return, but he would grant a Return showing the names of contractors struck off the list in connection with the supply of stores to the field force in South Africa. I want to have the names of the malefactors who supply defective stores at home, and I want to show them up. When I asked my hon. friend a question on the subject he said there was no necessity for such a Return, because only two individuals had been guilty of these offences. It now turns out that my hon. friend was misinformed. [Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS dissented.] Well, if he were not misinformed, he did not give the House the facts. I conclude he was informed. One of these firms, Bennett and Son—

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman would be entitled to discuss the cases of Underwood and Bennett on this Vote unless he can show that they attempted to pass off defective medical stores on the War Office.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I will confine myself to the vendors of bad physic and pills, and I say that precautions should be taken against the supply of castor oil by a contractor who had been previously struck off the list under another name. Any firm struck off for supplying bad medical stores should not be again allowed to supply any goods to Government agents. If such a firm reappears under another name and is taken on again, the impression created in the public mind is that someone in a responsible position desires to screen those guilty of so great a crime. The Return I desire is not confined to any one commodity. I refer to all contracts, including medical contracts, and I wish to know whether my hon. friend will give the Return in the form I ask for. It is most important that it should go forth clearly that no attempt, however influenced, will permit this House from insisting on a true and complete exposure of all transactions of this kind. To put the matter in order I will move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E (Cost of Medicines) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. James Lowther.*)

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): There are at

least two hon. Members interested in this matter, and I wish to know whether the question of the supply of stores is to be taken on this Vote or not.

MR. WYNDHAM: It would be very inconvenient to discuss this great and important question on the Medical Vote. It has not been suggested that there have been any malpractices in connection with the supply of medical stores.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Will the hon. Gentleman give us a fixed time for the discussion? I am quite ready to meet his views, but if we have to look through the Votes to be taken day by day it is not good enough.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I assume we will not be prevented from discussing this question again.

*THE CHAIRMAN: It seems to me that it would be more convenient to take it in its proper place, because if it is discussed now hon. Gentlemen will have to submit hypothetical arguments and assume that matters have occurred which have not occurred.

MR. WYNDHAM: If the Vote on which it can properly be discussed is not reached to-night, I will consult with the Leader of the House as to time being given for the discussion.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

DR. FARQUHARSON: There is one point which the hon. Gentleman did not answer. Under the favourable conditions which I hope will exist after the termination of the war, will the medical officers in the Army be allowed "study leave," to be devoted to rubbing off the rust of absence from the hospitals?

MR. WYNDHAM: That question will be considered when the time arrives.

DR. TANNER (Cork County, Mid): The Naval authorities have taken this matter up, and it would be well to extend it also to the Army.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.): May I ask what steps are being taken to inoculate against fever the troops now going out to South Africa? Inoculation

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is now known to be a great preventative against fever. I would also wish to know whether the subject matter used for inoculation is perfectly pure.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): The hon. Gentleman has not answered the point raised about the ambulances. It has been contended that our ambulances are not as good as those of the Boers. The other day the Financial Secretary to the War Office told us that the War Office were satisfied that our ambulances were as good as the ambulances of any foreign Power.

*GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke) desired before the Vote was passed to draw attention to the apparently large sum that had been voted for civilian and retired medical officers. In times of war we might well have to fall back on civilian and retired medical officers, but it was only reasonable to assume that in times of peace the active establishment should be sufficiently strong to do all the work which was imposed upon the department. To have to fall back in peace times upon civilian and retired medical officers seemed to him to be both unreasonable and unjust.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) wished to put a question with regard to the nurses who, when they were obliged to leave Johannesburg in the early stages of the war, had come to Cape Town and had been refused work, although the Cape Town hospitals were very full and the hospital staff was overworked. Forty nurses came down to Cape Town, and all were fully qualified and anxious to work, but their services were not accepted owing to some technical red tape rule that they were not under military regulations. He would be glad to have some information on the subject.

*COLONEL WELBY (Taunton) asked the Under Secretary if his attention had been drawn to a peculiar form of hospital cart, carrying the Geneva Red Cross, used by the Boers. When it was opened it contained apparently nothing but medical jars and bottles, but when the sides were hinged back it was found to be full of Krupp ammunition.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have no information as to the ingenious appliance referred to by my hon. and gallant friend.

I have taken great interest in the matter of ambulance wagons, and they seem to the eye of one who is not an expert admirably constructed for the purpose. But no doubt the peculiar conditions of South Africa might render it desirable to have lighter wagons. That is one of the many lessons we shall have to learn from this war, but I should like to point out that we can never hope to have ambulance wagons or other military appliances which will be suitable to every climate and all the conditions under which the British Army may be called upon to take the field. The question will, of course, engage our most serious attention. As to inoculation, the whole system is voluntary. Every soldier proceeding to South Africa is given the opportunity, if he wishes, of being inoculated, and a very large number—nearly 60 per cent. in some regiments—have availed themselves of that opportunity. The time for drawing conclusions from the experiment will be when we have the whole results before us at the end of the campaign. In reply to my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Pembroke, I have to say that we have offered inducements to the medical colleges to give them more officers. They are giving us more from year to year, and we hope that the stream will increase. I think I can hardly reply to the question of his hon. friend the Member for Islington. The question whether nurses should or should not be employed must be within the discretion of the medical officer in charge at the Cape, and I have no information upon which I can criticise his acts. I am surprised to hear that he should have left on one side the services of the admirable kind referred to by my hon friend.

MR. BARTLEY: The matter was commented upon very considerably at the Cape, where they failed to understand why the services of the nurses were refused.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammer-smith) pointed out that it was very desirable that the soldiers should have medical attendance until they had quite recovered, and that could not be given if the staff was not sufficiently strong by reason of the medical officers being constantly moved from one place to another. It would be impossible to make such arrangements as would benefit the soldiers unless some

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scheme was adopted of having medical officers permanently told off to take charge of particular places, and not removed so continuously as they were at present.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,288,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Bounty, etc., of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 134,571, including 30,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigtonshire) desired to put one or two points with regard to the Militia recruits. His first point was with regard to the bounty which it was proposed this year to increase. It was not clearly shown why there was a decrease of £102,000 under the sub-head. The second point was the treatment of Militia recruits on enlistment. He thought the recruits were entitled to expect to receive from the authorities more consideration than was given them at present. There was one grievance in particular, and that was the way in which the recruits were clothed. It was at the present time the practice to put them into what was called half-worn clothing, and a more disgusting practice could not be conceived than to take a cleanly lad from the country and put him into clothes which had been already worn for one or two trainings, by Heaven knew whom. By imposing a degrading and disgusting condition like that they did all in their power to deter self-respecting lads from joining the Militia. He had already ventured to urge that the term "Militia" was obsolete, and no longer had any real meaning whatever. All the Militia regiments had now become the third or fourth battalions of regiments of the line. There was not a single Militia regiment in the country at this moment, and he would like to see the term abolished altogether. Owing to the embodiment of the Militia and the employment of a large number of Militia officers abroad, and the absence of a considerable number of young officers who would, under the ordinary

condition of things, have been preparing at home with crammers for the examinations, it would be very reassuring to these young men and to their parents if something could be said to show what would be their position when the Militia came to be disembodied again. Supposing the conditions to be similar to those in operation before the embodiment of the Militia, the position of these young men would be very much impaired by the interruption of their studies.

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) drew attention to the position of sergeant-majors of the Militia. Now that the Militia regiments had been embodied they would receive exactly the same pay as sergeant-majors of the Regular regiments, but for some unknown reason they were not allowed the rank of warrant officers. We wanted to encourage non-commissioned officers to enter the Militia, but if they were not allowed warrant officers rank the consequence would be that we should lose a great many men. If the hon. Gentleman would grant that small concession, and give them the rank of warrant officers, we should get a number of the best non-commissioned officers to join. The next question to which he wished to refer was that of bounties, and that was really a very serious one. Most people who took an interest in the *Army Estimates* thought that the Militia was the most defective of all parts of the service, and yet nothing was ever being done to encourage the Militia. This year something was being done which certainly would discourage men from going into the Militia. An old soldier not in the Militia was offered £22 to serve one year, but if this old soldier had been patriotic enough to join the Militia some time past he was not to be allowed a penny more bounty than he would receive by joining for this year. The result was that we were putting a premium on old soldiers not going into the Militia. That was distinctly a way of doing away with the Militia. We had taken a long time to give the Militia the same advantages as other branches of the Reserve forces. We had reduced that branch to one-half the strength it ought to be, but in this case we were actually telling men that they would suffer by joining the Militia. What he wanted was that some extra bounty should be given to old

soldiers who had been patriotic enough to be in the Militia. About £3 or £5 would make all the difference. He referred also to the question of publishing what the bounties to Militiamen were to be. The result of not giving a statement of what the bounties were to be was that we were losing the advantage of so many months, and that so many fewer recruits would be obtained. If we waited till the summer time before publishing the bounties we should not get the same number of recruits as we should if they were published now. He wished a satisfactory answer on that point, and in order to get an answer he moved the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £2,287,900 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Warner.*)

*MR. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek) observed that hitherto there had been no difficulty in inducing old soldiers to enlist in the Militia. He remembered three years ago that in the regiment to which he had the honour to belong he had a strict examination made of the number of old Army men who were serving in the regiment at that time. That number was no less than 250. He quite agreed with the hon. Member who said that those men ought to look to the Militia as their ultimate military course of action. They were the backbone of the Militia. They came in at a time when they had a dozen or fifteen years good work in them, and anything that could be done to bring them into the Militia ought to be done. With reference to what the Government were going to do for the Militia in the coming year, he wished to draw attention to one or two points. In the case of the 4th Somerset Light Infantry, which sailed last week for the Cape, he stated that they went out to South Africa only 390 men strong. What was the reason of that? He was told by the hon. Member for North Somerset, who was a major in that battalion, that no less than 150 men had been taken away from that regiment and sent to the Cape to fill up the Line regiment to which they belonged. It was absolutely impossible to make the Militia a useful force for foreign service when they were emasculated in that battalion way. It was absolutely impossible that the Militia could serve two masters. It

ought to be a unit complete in itself. Another matter he wished to refer to had reference to musketry training. In his own regiment there were no less than seventy-six recruits of last year who had never had a rifle in their hands. It was perfectly possible that these men, recruited during the latter part of the year, could have had some sort of preliminary training, but instead of that, he supposed for economical reasons, they had been told that their musketry drill would be postponed till this year. The consequence was that they went out on foreign service absolutely ignorant of the first principles of their work. That was a matter which ought to be seriously considered by the War Office. In regard to the suggestion as to doing away with the title of Militia altogether, he expressed the hope that that would never be entertained by the Government, as it would be certain to stop recruiting. The Militia was a well known and thoroughly understood force, and he trusted the Government would do their best to bring it up in every way to the level of the Line.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said the Government plan with reference to the soldiers and the Militia appeared to be "the way not to do it." He did not wish to elaborate this point, which had been so thoroughly well brought before the House by the right hon. Baronet opposite. The strength of the Militia was nominally 130,000, but we could only put 45,000 men in the field. They had no staff, no transport, and no guns, and it seemed to him that a good deal was required to place them on a proper footing. Surely, if their services were of any value while with the Militia Battalion, the Government ought to consider that, and remit the examination in September. He trusted the Under Secretary for War would give the Committee a more definite understanding with reference to that matter.

DR. FARQUHARSON did not see much magic in the different name proposed to be applied. He had taken a great interest in this question on account of the condition into which the Aberdeen Militia had unfortunately fallen, that body having decreased in numbers from 800 strong to about 250. He was informed that it was all a question of

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bounties, and therefore he was glad to have the definite statement of the War Office on that point. Would the hon. Gentleman state whether the War Office had yet issued the order superseding the recruiting instruction of April, 1897? It would give a great impulse to the recruiting for the territorial regiments if that order could be issued at once.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) thought the decision of the authorities with regard to the bounties was a step in the right direction. An important part of the policy, however, was to make the Militia more efficient, and to induce them to extend their service abroad. How could that be reconciled with a policy of offering a large bounty to old regular soldiers to return to the service to stay at home? Would the Under Secretary state whether the advantage of improvements the Government proposed to extend to the Militia would be given to the Militia in the colonies, or were they to be limited to the United Kingdom?

COLONEL LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham) asked what was proposed to be done with the case of Militia regiments embodied next May which were deficient in officers. It would immensely relieve the anxiety of zealous colonels to know what course would be taken, as it was perfectly evident that battalions could not become efficient in six months if they were without company officers and without musketry instructors.

MR. WYNDHAM: My attention has been drawn to the fact that a decrease is shown under Sub-head D. "Bounties," and I am asked to reconcile that with the fact that, on two occasions, I have stated our intention to increase the bounties to the Militia. I thought I had made it clear, but I may remind the Committee that everything I have said about consolidating the bounties referred not to this year of emergency, but to the future. And necessarily so, because when the Militia are embodied, as hon. Members are well aware, a great number of the bounties drop—in fact, all the bounties drop with the exception of the bounty for re-engagement of the Militia Reserve and for the Special Reserve. Therefore it is impossible in this year when the whole of the Militia is embodied to deal

with the permanent scheme in connection with the Militia bounties. This year we are retaining one bounty, which lapses if we take no action — namely, the 10s. bounty for ordinary enlistment, but we are giving a bounty of £5 for re-enlistment and re-engagement. That bounty of £5 will be given to ex-Militiamen, ex-Volunteers, and ex-soldiers of the regular Army. That, in part, deals with some of the objections which have been raised on the score of the old soldier who can get £22 by joining the Royal Reserve battalions. But he gets a good deal by going into the Militia. He gets his pay and allowances, amounting to 1s. 9d. a day, all the time he is embodied. By the law as it stands he gets forty-two days more over that as a gratuity, and 30s. in addition to that. So that he gets a bounty of considerably over £5 in addition to the pay during the whole period. He also gets his £5 on re-enlistment or re-engagement, and if he is embodied for more than six months we propose to give him seven days pay and allowances for each month or part of a month in addition. Therefore, altogether, the old soldier who goes into the Militia will in any case get in gratuities more than £10, while if he is embodied for a longer period than six months he will get a much larger amount in addition to his pay. So that although a man in the Royal Reserve battalions would undoubtedly get more, the discrepancy is not nearly so large as might be naturally supposed. I think I have indicated pretty fully what our terms are for the Militia this year. I regret that the Army Order has not yet been published. I have the proof here, and as far as I know it will now come out without further delay. These Army Orders have to be compiled very carefully, as, although it is easy to convey in popular terms the upshot of them, they are legal instruments having to be drawn out with a number of cross references to existing regulations, and, like all legal work, cannot be rushed through. As to the hon. Baronet who urged that all Militiamen should have new clothes, I think he rather exaggerated the point. Unless I am misinformed there is no discrimination as against Militiamen in this matter. My belief is that recruits of the Line also have partly used clothing in which to do their drill during the first few weeks. I can, however, promise the hon. Baronet that we will go into the

question very carefully, as it might possibly act as a discouragement to a good many.

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: I have been informed that the practice still continues which prevailed when I was in the service, of issuing clothing which has to serve a certain number, not of years, but of trainings. I think the period is five trainings, and the clothing has to serve for three years as dress clothing, and two years as undress clothing. If the recipient terminates his service before the expiration of that period the clothing has to put in the balance of the time on the back and legs of somebody else.

MR. WYNDHAM: The subject should be considered. In ordinary times when the Militia train for only one month there is a much greater loss to the public in the case of a man who wears the clothing for only one training, and then leaves the Militia, than where the clothing is worn by a regular soldier. However, the matter deserves attention. The hon. Baronet suggested that we should drop the title of Militia, but at once another hon. Member equally devoted to the force thought we should do nothing of the kind. I am bound to say that of all the gratuitous ways of provoking public opprobrium and abuse none is more successful than the attempt to change the name of anything connected with the Army. It is a desperate remedy, and one to be taken only in the last resort. I hope we shall see a still closer connection between the Militia and the Line battalions. I am sure the Militia would like it, and I am perfectly certain that after the experience they have had of the Militia in South Africa the Line would welcome such an association. The hon. Baronet has raised the question as to what we propose to do for young officers in the Militia whose battalions have proceeded to South Africa, who are desirous of passing from the Militia into the Line, who have completed some part of their qualification as to training, and who, under normal circumstances, would go up for examination. I may say that the War Office mean to see that they shall suffer no drawback whatever from having proceeded to the theatre of operations. As to those who go up for examination in September, we shall act upon the lines suggested, and we are acting upon them

in regard to those who go up to a nearer examination than September. They will, moreover, be really relieved from all examination, and steps will certainly be taken to see that no injustice is done. As to the number of commissions which we have to give to the Militia, it is so large that there will be no examination, because the number of vacancies is in excess of the number of candidates. The case put by my hon. and gallant friend of an officer in the Militia in training last year, but who, being embodied all this year, cannot prosecute his studies, will undoubtedly be considered. With regard to the question raised by the hon. Member for Lichfield, I cannot give any promise beyond a personal one to look into the matter. The hon. Member for the Leek Division brought up the question of the Militia Reserve, and he pointed out that one battalion had proceeded to South Africa with less than 400 men. That is so, but as I pointed out to the House the other day, we have made very much smaller inroad upon the Militia Reserve than has ever been known before or than has ever been generally anticipated. We have done our best not to encroach upon the Militia Reserve, but in certain cases—with both their Line battalions in South Africa, which have been subject to very heavy losses and misfortunes, we have had to fall back upon the Militia Reserve. But as the Army Reserve increases the necessity for having a Militia Reserve at all, will, I hope, lapse and lapse soon. We have always regarded it as a makeshift and temporary arrangement to tide over the period during which we were building up the Army Reserve. I think that replies to all the questions. With regard to my hon. and gallant friend's question I may say that I have had most encouraging reports. As to his statement that boys who have never done a day's drill will be useless, what does the hon. Member propose?

MAJOR RASCH: We have got other sources.

MR. WYNDHAM: Clearly we should make use of all the available sources we have got. Everyone knows the tax which has been placed upon the commissioned ranks during the war, for we have been short of officers, and I do not know of

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any feat of legerdemain which will produce officers at a moment's notice.

*GENERAL LAURIE asked whether the Militia Reserve which the Under Secretary for War had stated was only a temporary measure could not be dealt with in the meantime as supernumerary to the establishment of the regiment, which would not be weakened by the deduction of these men. Passing to another point, he inferred from the proposals of the Government that the provision of artillery as a portion of the Militia force applied purely to garrison artillery. He desired to ask if it was not possible to add to our field artillery force by drawing on the Militia. It had been said in the House and outside by officers who had served in the Royal Artillery that it took two years to make a driver. It did if we obtained a raw recruit who had never handled a horse, and introduced him to a pair of horses which had never seen him or one another before and which he had never seen; but if we brought in a driver with his own horses it did not take two years. Indeed, he had known drivers with their own horses who had been very efficient in fourteen days. What was wanted in a field battery on service was the ability to get the most work out of a pair of horses, and to make them work with the others in the gun team. That was a thing which any young farmer, having his own horses, was able to do, and there was no difficulty in the matter. The Canadian Militia artillery were only in camp sixteen days, and were a very efficient body, so efficient indeed that three batteries of them had been sent to South Africa, and he hoped we should have reports of their work there which would enable the War Office authorities to verify whether the Militia artillery might be made so efficient as to be able to take the field. He had seen them working alongside the infantry battalions, and they were thoroughly suited to take their places in the line of battle. If the Canadian artillery could do this, he thought the British Militiamen were equally able to do it, and short as we were of field guns for our large force of Militia and Volunteer infantry, and short as we should be even under the proposals of the Government to increase them, he suggested that this

was a subject that might be advantageously considered and worked out.

MR. WARNER: I cannot quite accept the argument of the hon. Gentleman upon this point. The class of men who joined the Militia this year and get this sum of money are not the people I have spoken of. They will not take £10, as he makes out, instead of taking £20 for one year. There is the case of the old soldier who is already in the Militia. He has joined the Militia, and we want to encourage him to join in the future. He will get no sort of bounty beyond the forty-two days pay, and that comes to £5 14s. Every Militiaman will get this amount, but the old soldier gets nothing because he has joined the Militia. If he was not in the Militia he would get this £22, and he ought to have some compensation for being shut out from earning this extra sum. The hon. Gentleman said he got his pay, but so do the Royal Reserves. The old soldier who has joined the Militia is debarred from getting this £22, and he gets instead £5, if he serves for a year. That £5 is a gratuity that you give to every Militiaman, and what I am pleading for is that the old soldier in the Militia should get something as compensation for what he would have got if he had not joined the Militia. If the hon. Gentleman cannot give me some hope of doing something for these old soldiers I must press for a division upon this Amendment.

Question put, and agreed to.

Original Question again proposed.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that several times last session references had been made to the Channel Islands Militia. Upon one occasion recently attention was drawn to this question, and in consequence the War Office decided to reorganise the Channel Islands Militia, and they had stated, from time to time, what the general lines of reorganisation of a portion of this Militia must be. He noticed that in the Estimates there was a reduced number of men taken for the Channel Islands, consequent upon the disbanding of one regiment of the Guernsey Militia, and he wished to know why nothing was contemplated in the Estimates in regard to the reorganisation of the system

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said he desired to know whether it was the intention of the Government to embody with the rest of the Militia the Engineer Militia, and the submarine mining division attached to commercial harbours.

MR. WYNDHAM: In reply to the right hon. Baronet opposite I cannot give any further information in reference to the Channel Islands Militia. The Channel Islands have representative institutions, and we have been in constant communication with their representative assemblies, but the discussion of these matters takes a very long time. Constitutional as well as military questions have arisen, and we have pointed out what we consider is desirable, in the absence of which the Militia will scarcely be a useful addition to the defensive force of the Empire. We have been met with objections, but I hope that ultimately a satisfactory basis for an argument will be arrived at, and I trust that it will not be impossible for my Department to come to an understanding with the representatives of the Channel Islands. In regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for South Islington, I may say that the terms of the Order will certainly apply to Militia Engineers, and as regards the other corps I will ascertain.

MAJOR RASCH: Supposing a boy is not serving in South Africa, but serving with his Militia battalion at home, and is thus precluded from prosecuting his studies, will he be placed at a disadvantage?

MR. WYNDHAM: My answer is that I have not got a decision upon that specific point, but that is the decision which has been arrived at in respect of boys in February, and I cannot imagine that we shall alter that decision. I cannot see that we shall have any difficulty in following it out, because I imagine that in September we shall require a great number of officers, probably in excess of those coming from the Militia.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. £144,000, Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances.

*MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): I should like to ask a few questions with regard to these extra grants. Some of these questions have been referred to a Committee of Yeomanry officers, and I can quite understand that my hon. friend is not able to reply until they have reported. I should like to draw attention to the fact that the Yeomanry will be going into training again shortly, and it is important that we should have some information in regard to the grants. The Secretary of State for War said the Government were going to grant yeomen a sum of £5, and I should like to know from the hon. Member what the requirements from the yeomen will be in order to earn that grant. May I also be allowed to suggest that it is of the utmost importance that Yeomen, like the Volunteers, should have opportunities afforded them for more musketry training, and that in addition they should have facilities for training with other arms? It may be extremely hard for some regiments to go into camp at great distances from home all at the same time, and perhaps arrangements could be made for them joining with other forces camping in their own localities; and then, if possible, train some of them at a later period of the year by going in camp with the Militia, or Volunteers, or the Artillery, and give the men an extra grant for such training. I can quite understand that this proposal might be convenient to some regiments and not to others, but the importance of training Yeomen, whether for cavalry or not, with other arms is one which the War Office would do well to consider. I know that there has been a meeting of Yeomanry commanding officers, who I believe have appointed a committee to consider the question, and though I do not myself presume to express any opinion as to drill, I do think the War Office and the Government should give their careful consideration to the suggestions of their military advisers upon this point. For my part—and I think I am expressing the opinion of a large number of Yeomanry officers—I think it would be far better if you so trained the Yeomanry as to ensure that those who are members of the force shall be made thoroughly efficient and thoroughly competent to do any work which they may be called upon to do in the future. If the War Office are ready to take up a strong line upon

this subject, I am certain that the whole of the officers and the men in the Yeomanry force will loyally do their best to make themselves efficient.

MR. WYNDHAM: It will be convenient for me to reply now to the points which have been raised. With regard to the suggestion thrown out by my hon. friend I may say that camps will be established to last for twenty-eight days in close proximity to rifle ranges, and conditions upon which men will receive grants for passing a special course of musketry will be drawn up. Special grants will be made as follows: The contingent allowance will be raised from £3 to £5, and another £5 will be given to every Yeoman who produces a horse at the camp. Travelling expenses will be given to and from the camp. The pay will be seven shillings a day, and these allowances will follow the procedure which has been adopted in connection with the Volunteers, and will be given to those who are present during fourteen days. Out of the twenty-eight days, eight days leave may be granted by the commanding officer without any deduction of pay, but if any leave is granted in addition to the eight days it will entail a loss of pay. To earn the increased contingent allowances they must serve fourteen working days in camp out of the twenty-eight, and out of the twenty-eight days the commanding officer can give a yeoman eight days leave without loss, but any leave in addition to that will be deducted. As the hon. Member knows, it is occasionally necessary to give a man leave beyond this eight days, in order that he may not lose a great deal of money, and in such cases there would be a loss of pay. I hope I have made that point quite clear. My hon. friend referred to the Yeomanry cavalry, but in regard to that force we cannot this year attempt to make any drastic change. I have heard the Commander-in-Chief himself say that the Yeomanry Cavalry have always done as much as can be expected considering the limited facilities afforded them, but under present conditions it is impossible to convert them into a first-rate cavalry force. With the limited opportunities given them they have always done their best. I think the Committee will agree with me that there are very good reasons for not making any violent changes at this

moment. We will await the return of some of the most experienced officers now serving in South Africa, when they may be able to tell us a great deal about mounted infantry work, and how they can best co-operate with cavalry. But even in this year I feel that all interested in the Yeomanry, and I claim to be one of them, will approve of the changes that have been introduced, especially in view of the fact that the experience of the war shows that great mobility is likely to be a very important factor in all future wars.

*COLONEL WELBY said he was very glad to hear that there were to be no drastic changes in the Yeomanry in the present year. He hoped that the opinion of Yeomanry commanding officers would not only be asked for, but taken into consideration before any drastic changes in the Yeomanry were made. One difficulty was to get men for the Yeomanry, but if they did not make the dress smart enough they would not get the men. Men could be got for cavalry when they could not be got for infantry, partly because of the dress and partly because of having a horse to ride, and having the pleasure of wearing spurs. He hoped that regard would be had for these considerations before any further changes were made. His own experience was that if a commanding officer agreed with the War Office, and if anything went wrong, the responsibility was put on him, but if everything went right the War Office with modest pleasure accepted it as their own work. If the commanding officer gave an opinion contrary to the fixed mind of the War Office, and anything went wrong, that opinion was forgotten and the whole responsibility was thrown on him. He hoped that as regarded the Yeomanry the opinions of the commanding officers, the result of their practical experience, would have more weight than the merely theoretical advice of the War Office. He did not know what kind of carbine the Yeomanry were now armed with, but his own experience was that cavalry carbines were very imperfectly sighted, and he hoped the matter would be inquired into. He believed it was true of the Yeomanry as it was of the Regulars, that every carbine with which a man was able to make good practice had been specially sighted. He had tried cavalry carbines over and over again, and he defied any

man to make good practice with many of them. He should like to direct the attention of the Under Secretary to the pay of the regimental sergeant-majors of Yeomanry regiments. At present it was 3s. 10d. per day. Most of them had been squadron sergeant-majors in the Regulars at 4s. 2d. a day, and their present duties were more onerous and responsible. As a result of recent changes far more work now fell on regimental sergeant-majors than formerly. In addition, when a regimental sergeant-major in the Volunteers retired he was entitled to a first-class pension, whereas a regimental sergeant-major in the Yeomanry was only entitled to a second-class pension, the difference being threepence per day. There was now an opportunity of considering the pay and the pension of these men, and he hoped that the inequalities he had mentioned would be adjusted, and a real injustice removed.

*MR. HERMON-HODGE (Oxfordshire, Henley) said he desired to join in the appeal for better pay and better pensions for regimental sergeant-majors in the Yeomanry, whose work in connection with the formation of the Imperial Yeomanry had been very great; and he hoped that they would be allowed to return to the troop instead of the squadron system, as many places could produce a troop which could not raise a squadron. There were six troops in his regiment, and they were only allowed three sergeant-majors, and three officers were now paying £100 a year apiece in order to maintain permanent staff-sergeants. He did not think that Yeomanry captains should be called on to pay to make good the defective organisation forced on them by the War Office. The troop system should be restored and officers should be provided with trained soldiers. It was only on such conditions that the Yeomanry, which had proved itself a good friend to England, would be able to retain its efficiency.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): It seems to me, if I may venture to intervene in a technical matter, that there is one consideration above all others which governs this question. When a Yeoman is the real thing, he constitutes an item of a very useful force, but in many cases members of Yeomanry Corps have not that intimate knowledge of the horse and his

attributes which is really necessary to the making of an efficient cavalry soldier. If a Yeoman is the son of a farmer brought up in the country, he knows not only how to sit on a horse with comfort to himself and safety to other people, but he can manage his horse, groom it, and keep it free from those evils which afflict it if it is badly managed. That is the man who makes a good cavalry soldier. But I am afraid that in many Yeomanry Corps there are many men who have not horses of their own, and who have to hire horses during the period of training, who cannot groom their horses, and who do not know how to adjust the saddle or how to keep a horse efficient in active service. I do not think that a regiment composed of men of that kind could be considered efficient. I should like to know how many of the Imperial Yeomanry now in South Africa have not the qualifications to which I have referred. It seems to me that more depends on these qualifications than on uniform or pay, because you would have men thoroughly competent to look after their horses, who would not need a groom or syce to keep their horses as well as themselves in good and efficient working order.

MR. WYNDHAM: As far as comfort in riding and safety to others is concerned, I think the right hon. Gentleman may be at rest. I was very glad to see such a number of complaints from unsuccessful candidates and their parents as to the riding tests being too difficult. That gave me a great deal of confidence. As to grooming horses and putting on saddlery, all the Yeomanry had to undertake that duty before they went out.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said it seemed to him that the popularity of any branch of the auxiliary services depended on the chance of seeing active service, and he did not think any branch of the service would value a system which deprived them of that chance. It was perfectly clear to him that the Yeomanry would have little or no chance of seeing active service if they insisted on going out as cavalry. If it was made perfectly plain that the chance of the Yeomanry seeing active service depended more on their acting as mounted infantry than as cavalry, that would do away with the prejudice against mounted

infantry, and greater willingness would be shown to conform to the new system.

*MR. RUTHERFORD (Lancashire, Darwen) suggested that in order to improve the Yeomanry there should be permanent camps, where the Government found tents and stabling for the horses, and where one regiment after another from certain districts could be trained. In regard to pay, it is well known that a sergeant-major when he joined the permanent staff of a Yeomanry regiment had his pay reduced; but he had the privilege of taking civil employment. The War Office, however, insisted on his wearing his uniform, and that practically put him out of the running for civil employment. If the Government did not see their way to withdraw the order in regard to wearing uniform, they should increase the pay. He supported his hon. friend in advocating a return to the system of making the troop a unit instead of a squadron.

*MR. ABEL SMITH (Christchurch) said recent events had shown that there was a large class of young men in the country who would make excellent Yeomen, but who under the conditions which had hitherto prevailed had not been able to join a Yeomanry corps. If there were increased rates of pay and allowances we would be able to get hold of that class of men. He would like to know whether the Yeomanry camps were to be brigade camps, and if the Yeomanry were to be provided with transport, as the Militia and Volunteers were. He advocated a return to the troop system, for the squadron system was very difficult to carry out. The men and horses of a squadron frequently extended over forty miles of country, and it was absolutely impossible to get them together, even by train, for drill or for any other purpose.

MR. GRAHAM (St. Pancras, West) said that a few years ago a Committee was appointed to consider the Yeomanry system, and they came to the conclusion that in order to effect a small saving the adjutant and the regimental sergeant-major should be made to serve in two regiments. He contended that there should be a return to the old system, with a sergeant-major and adjutant to each regiment. With respect to the training of Yeomanry, he was

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

radically inclined, and he believed that those officers who had gone out to South Africa would bring back experiences which would enable them to suggest the re-organisation of the force. In his own opinion, we had been training the Yeomanry on a false system, too much like Regular cavalry, and he should like to see them put more on the footing of mounted infantry. Cavalry might be exercised in the Long Valley at Aldershot or on Salisbury Plain, but that could not be done in the country. He hoped that the Yeomanry would be turned into and drilled as mounted infantry.

MR. WARNER said that the long service medal had been given to the Volunteers, and it ought to be given to the Yeomanry also. The sergeant-majors of the Yeomanry, or most of them, were in South Africa at the present moment, and he thought that the Royal Reserves should be called upon to furnish non-commissioned officers to train the Yeomanry until their own staff return from the seat of war.

CAPTAIN JESSEL said that at present each regiment of Yeomanry had only half an adjutant, and that did not contribute much to their efficiency. He knew of a case where an adjutant had to travel about from Brighton to London, and from London to Oxford, and it could not be expected that he could cover such a large extent of country with efficiency to his corps. It was announced the other day that a Deputy Adjutant-General was to be appointed to look after the interests of the Volunteers, and another for the Militia. He wanted to know under which Deputy Adjutant-General the Yeomanry were to fall, or whether they would have a Deputy Adjutant-General of their own. The supply of non-commissioned officers to undertake the duty of the permanent staff who had gone to South Africa was important. In one regiment the whole staff had gone, and in most of those he had inquired about the half of the staff had gone.

MR. SEELY (Lincoln) said that, although not a Yeomanry officer, he would support the suggestion that the War Office should give the Yeomanry regiments a satisfactory staff of adjutants and sergeant-majors. He was sure that after the services rendered by the

Yeomanry in South Africa, the country would be very willing to support the War Office in doing what was necessary to provide them with a proper staff.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT supported the suggestion that the long-service medal should be given to the Yeomanry and the Militia as well as the Volunteers. He also advocated a return to the troop unit instead of the squadron in the Yeomanry, for he knew of a regiment which had had to be disbanded on account of the great expense of the squadron system.

MR. BUTCHER (York) said that a large number of clipped horses had been bought for the Imperial Yeomanry. It appeared that it was not customary to purchase rugs along with the horses. A demand was made for rugs, but the answer of the Department was that it was contrary to regulations to pay for these. Well, these clipped horses were taken out of the warm stables and sent across country to Liverpool in open cattle trucks, in bitterly cold weather, without rugs. The result was that something like thirty of these horses died of pneumonia on the way to South Africa. That was a most destructive as well as cruel way of treating horses, and he hoped that precautions would be taken to prevent such a thing happening again.

MR. WYNDHAM said that his hon. friend the Member for York probably knew that all the arrangements for buying horses and their equipment, and moving them about, had been delegated by the War Office to the Imperial Yeomanry Committee, and so far as he knew they had discharged their trust in the most admirable manner. He knew of no such case as that mentioned by his hon. friend, but if clipped horses had been travelled without rugs it was a great error of judgment, and it was not due to any regulation or any remissness on the part of the War Office. As to the long service medal, it had been decided at present that it should not be given to the Yeomanry or Militia. In reply to the hon. Member for Christchurch, he could say that the camps would as far as possible be brigade camps. In regard to the suggestions that had been made as to some change in the administrative units of the Yeomanry, the increase in the permanent staff, the appointment of

a sergeant-major to each regiment—all these were points which would be considered when the Yeomanry came back from the war, and when they would be more fully represented at home. He was very glad that this year, for the first time for many years, there had been an opportunity of discussing the Yeomanry Vote. What was wanted was to make that force as efficient as the members of it had proved that it could be made if they had facilities given them.

*COLONEL WELBY asked the hon. Gentleman to answer his question in regard to increased pay of the regimental sergeant-majors.

MR. WYNDHAM said he was not in a position that afternoon to answer the question, which would come under the general consideration of yeomanry.

MR. WARNER asked what about the efficiency in the staff.

MR. WYNDHAM said that everything that could be done to increase the efficiency of the staff this year would be done.

Resolution agreed to.

4. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,230,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including Pay, etc., of the Permanent Staff, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

*SIR HENRY FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes) said that as the Volunteers were taking a prominent part in the war in South Africa, and as they were going to take a still more prominent part in the scheme of home defence, there were one or two points in connection with the capitation grants which he should like to bring to the notice of the Under Secretary for War. There was no doubt that Volunteers were coming forward to be enrolled, not only in hundreds, but in thousands, and the question arose in the minds of army officers, how these men coming forward should be dealt with. Many Volunteer battalions, which hitherto had not been up to the maximum of

strength had now reached that point, and it was difficult now to determine how those who were in excess of the establishments were to be arranged for. He was very anxious to know from the War Office whether commanding officers would be empowered to continue enrolling men into their battalions, though the establishment had been reached. His reason for raising this point was this. If several hundred men in excess of the establishment were enrolled, would the commanding officer be able to receive an assurance that the capitation grant would be extended to them, because he would have to clothe them and fit them out as Volunteers—possibly at his own expense, for the War Office did not see their way to help in this matter. He thought it would be much better that men should be allowed, when the establishment was reached, to continue to be enrolled. His reason for urging it was this. At the present time he saw great difficulties in forming new companies—first of all, with regard to Army instructions from the Regular Army, when so many of the regiments of that force were in foreign parts, and also a difficulty might arise in providing rifle ranges for these extra companies. He hoped the War Office would advise the House if they would allow commanding officers to continue enrolling men, notwithstanding the fact that the establishment had been reached. Then he came to the question of clothing. Clothing was paid for out of the capitation grant. But a rumour was spreading abroad that a suggestion was going to be thrown out that a second suit of clothes for Volunteers should be asked for in the shape of furnishing them with a set of khaki for working purposes. That involved a considerable amount of money, and there was possibly an idea in the mind of the War Office that an extra capitation grant was about to be given to the Volunteers, out of which they were going to provide this second suit. There was no doubt a radical change must take place in the uniform of the whole Army. He believed that the present state of the uniform of all our troops when in England would, owing to the lessons learnt during this war, have to be very carefully considered. Were the commanding officers to select their own places for camps, or were they to go to places selected by the authorities? Up to the present time, early in the year,

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they had been asked what period of the month they wished to go into camp. This year things were entirely changed. They were going to have camps formed mainly for instruction, and in many counties there were no ranges for camps. Therefore he thought it would be wise (and the commanding officers would fall in with this view) if the Government would take upon themselves to give instructions for camps to be formed at such places where they could find sites having facilities for musketry. He was sure commanding officers would give up their own pet ideas of old places for camping—which to a certain extent were advantageous in their way. He did not press his hon. friend to give an immediate answer to these remarks. Perhaps it would be wise to issue War Office memorandums or Army orders as to some of the questions about the selection of sites for camps, and also to promulgate as rapidly as possible this new scheme, in order not only that employers of labour, but the officers and Volunteers themselves, could make their arrangements for carrying out to the best of their ability the scheme of instruction, with which he most heartily agreed. He might tell the Committee that the military authorities had taken many lessons from the Volunteers in the early days in the matter of uniform. He could recollect, when they found their own uniforms, that many of the regiments were clothed in a Norfolk jacket, knickerbockers, and gaiters. Did not we see now that the clothing in which our troops had gone out to South Africa, also that in which they went to Egypt, was largely due to the lessons the Volunteers taught as to useful clothing? Then it was most imperative, as they were now about to go into camp for a much longer period than they had ever been before, that an extra pair of trousers should be provided for the Volunteers for this work. He hoped it would be explained whether they were going to have a larger capitation grant in order that they might carry out these requirements. He saw the difficulty in re-clothing the Volunteer force unless the capitation grant was increased. Another point in connection with this extended training that he wished to bring to the notice of the Under Secretary of State for War was this: Up to the present time, on a young officer joining the force, when he had gone through a month's training at the

school of instruction, or at the dépôt, and attained his certificate, he had been granted an allowance of £20. He saw a great difficulty this year, as they were to be called out for twenty-eight days, in calling upon young officers to give another month to attending instruction at the dépôts, to obtain the certificate. In this emergency year, if the War Office could see their way to grant some indulgence as regards the outfit of young officers, it would be appreciated very much by all who were anxious to join the force. He should give it his warmest support.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he was not in the habit of intervening in debates of this kind, but he did not wish to lose the opportunity of expressing the great satisfaction and pleasure with which he saw that a great step forward was going to be taken this year in promoting Volunteering. He was one of those, like the hon. Member who had just spoken, who remembered the beginning of the Volunteer movement in 1859. In fact, he was one of the original Volunteers in that year, and ever since then he had had a strong feeling that the Government of the day did not do what it ought to have done in the way of encouraging Volunteering. Whether it was the old-fashioned ideas which held control of the War Office, or want of sufficient money, the policy of the War Office had not been sufficiently favourable in encouraging the Volunteer corps in the country. He thought a great opportunity was lost in the first years after 1859 to make the Volunteer movement rightly popular by giving it not only support in money, but certain privileges which would have made the position of a Volunteer more generally desirable. We ought all to feel that it was a privilege to serve our country; and he earnestly hoped that the policy adopted by the Government this year would be pursued as a continuous policy. In his early days he and others felt that the time might come to introduce conscription in this country, as in the Continental nations of Europe; and they always felt that one of the best securities against conscription was a large Volunteer force, which would prove a reserve for the Army in times like those through which we are now passing. Their hope was that the Volunteer movement would familiarise the citizens with the idea that

it was a man's duty to be willing to make some sacrifice for the benefit of his country. He was not competent to enter into the details of many of the questions which would contribute to great improvement in the Volunteer system; but he should like to say that we ought to be prepared to give support to the War Office in any scheme for the improvement of the Volunteers. One of these was the provision of rifle ranges. It was more difficult to find such ranges for the Volunteers than for the Regular Army, and the difficulty was much greater now than in the old days, when a 500 yards range was thought sufficient for ordinary purposes. Something might also be done in the way of influencing employers to give certain advantages to those of their employees who were Volunteers, and to make it easy for them to attend their drills, and go into camp when called out. He was persuaded that by taking advantage of the flowing tide there would be a great response in the country to anything the Government might do in favour of the encouragement of the Volunteer movement. The more encouragement they could give, especially to the training of Volunteer officers, and making them thoroughly competent in all military duties, the better it would be for the force. He believed there would be a general recognition of any efforts the Government took in favour of making the Volunteers popular, and in favour of making what they were doing this year not a temporary measure, but a permanent policy.

MR. MORRELL (Oxfordshire, Woodstock) said that something ought to be done in making provision for the training of Volunteer officers. The main difficulty was finance. The Vote showed an increase of £605,000 upon last year's estimate, and the total of £1,230,000 worked out at about £5 a head, which was approximately the value the War Office put upon the Volunteer force. Surely the Volunteers were worth more than £5 a head. The commanding officers knew that they had to add considerably to the capitation grant before they could get their corps into an efficient state. When the details of the increase in the capitation grant were looked into it was found that £37,000 was in aid of equipment and greatcoats. He asked himself what number of men that contemplated; how

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many men were going to be added for that amount? Then there was an increase of £204,000 for the purpose of camps. Camps were exceedingly valuable, and if efficiently carried on might be made great places for training, but anyone who had experience knew that many hours in the day were wasted in camp. If the Government would allow a sufficient sum, many things could be done in camp which had never been done hitherto. The drill book had become a mere incident, and details required to be worked out in the field. A man should be taught the handy use of tools and weapons. Some remedy must be found for the waste of time which now took place. There was an increase of £92,000 in miscellaneous charges, £84,000 of which was for expenses in horsing guns and wagons. Whether that was attributed to the increase in the number of artillery and engineers he did not know, but if it was it showed a desire to improve those two units of the force. The increase of £604,000 included £330,000 on account of the war in South Africa. Was it intended that the Volunteers who had gone out should drop their Volunteering altogether? If that were so, he and those who thought with him were at cross purposes with the War Office.

*COLONEL COTTON - JODRELL (Cheshire, Wirral) assumed that the remarks made by the right hon. Gentleman in reference to the Yeomanry also applied to the Volunteers. That being so, he would like to know exactly how the increased capitation grant would be calculated.

MR. WYNDHAM: If a man is in camp over fourteen days the capitation grant is made on the higher scale. If he is in camp less than fourteen days it is made on the lower scale.

*COLONEL COTTON - JODRELL said that what was required to increase the efficiency of the Volunteer officers was that greater facilities should be given them to become acquainted with the routine and discipline of the Regular Army. The question of clothing was a question of management. In the corps with which he was connected they were able to supply a man with a red serge frock and a blue serge frock out of the present capitation

grant, and that had been done without detriment to the regiment. There were many uses in the future to which Volunteers might be put which could only be decided by the experience which officers would bring back from South Africa, and he hoped that some new scheme might be drawn up under which they might become accustomed to fight and would be taught to fight according to the conditions of the enclosed countries in which they might be called upon to take the field.

[The chair was at this point taken by Mr. WODEHOUSE (Bath).]

MR. SCOTT MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest) congratulated the Government on the recruiting of the Volunteer forces, but pointed out that the greatest difficulty was to get officers of the right kind in sufficient numbers. We would not get them until further inducements were given them to join, and he suggested that a larger grant should be made for the purposes of uniform, the £20 grant not being sufficient to properly fit a man out. There were a great many gentlemen living in the country and engaged in agricultural pursuits who would make good officers of Volunteers, and form the best leaders in times of war, but who in these times of depression were not able to undertake the responsibilities entailed upon them by taking a commission. He also called attention to the fact that there were a large number of men in Southampton engaged in Government works who belonged to the Hants Brigade, who when they went to camp had the time spent there deducted from their holidays, and who while they were in camp were allowed no pay. He submitted that the Government in this respect ought to be a model employer, and contended that they could hardly expect private employers to grant greater facilities for men to go to camp than were granted by the Government itself. He also asked what was intended to be done with reference to a cycle grant, having regard to the valuable work now done by cyclists.

MR. WYNDHAM: I propose to give a grant of £2 2s. for every man who rides a cycle.

MR. SCOTT MONTAGU said that his point was that a grant should be made

for the purpose of keeping up the cycle. He further suggested that a grant should be made to local farmers for the provision of transport. He congratulated the Government on the proposal to add a mounted infantry company to every Volunteer battalion, and suggested that where possible they might be allowed to form more than one, and thought that a useful purpose might be served by exempting Volunteers from jury service, which in itself would be a great inducement for many men to join.

MR. CHANNING trusted that the great reform with regard to the Volunteer system which had been announced would affect the Volunteers as a whole, and not merely the details. When speaking on a previous occasion of a Volunteer army corps he meant by that phrase that the Volunteer system might be so arranged as to enable all the Volunteers to be brought together and gain a more experienced knowledge of the art of war, so that in a case of emergency the Government might be able to form what in reality would be an army corps for national defence out of the Volunteers. He hoped that that view would be adopted in the future, and that the Volunteers would not be treated merely as feeders to the Army.

MR. WYNDHAM: I can assure the hon. Gentleman who spoke last that the War Office has no intention whatever of treating the Volunteers as feeders for the Army, and I may remind him that we are making changes of various kinds in regard to the Volunteer force. The hon. Gentleman who opened the discussion gave most valuable information, and all the suggestions he has made will be most carefully considered, and not less carefully because of the regard he has shown in not pressing for an immediate answer on every point he has brought before us. The Volunteer force has increased since I introduced my emergency scheme far more rapidly than I ventured to anticipate. In the home district the number of Volunteers on November 1 was 36,351; on March 1 the number was 41,725. The establishment of the Home district is 44,312 men, and when the fact that the district has provided the City Imperial Volunteers and the Imperial Yeomanry with 2,590 men is taken into account it

can be said that the home district has jumped up to its establishment number at a single bound. The total strength of the Volunteers throughout the kingdom on November 1 was 230,427. Since then there has been a net increase of 19,179, making a total of 249,606 men, exclusive of the 11,389 men who have gone out to South Africa, so that between November 1 and March 1 there had been an increase of over 30,000 men in the Volunteers. There could not be a more striking testimony of the patriotism of the people. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has called attention to the clothing of the Militia. That is a question which should not be very urgently pressed at this moment. I am able to announce that there is a Committee sitting to inquire into the whole question of the clothing of the Army, and they are rapidly arriving at a conclusion which, I think, will be agreeable to the House. I have taken notes of the other matters which have been pressed upon my attention, and can promise that they will be carefully considered. The hon. Member for Woodstock made a very temperate speech, and asked for some explanation of the figures. Estimates are always very difficult to follow, I know. We are paying the nominal capitation grant this year instead of dividing it, so that from our apparent generosity it has risen to £255,000. Putting £330,000 as the actual increase, I should distribute that by allowing £200,000 for camps and ranges, £12,000 for travelling expenses to and fro, £38,000 for equipment, and £80,000 for transport, horses, wagons, and so on. I am glad to find the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, as an original Volunteer, coming forward to bless the scheme of the Government, and to urge us to fresh efforts. The Committee may rest assured that, while the Government are doing their best this year, we hope by the aid of experience to do more in the future.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT thought that no great difficulties would arise in regard to the proposals of the Government, and that employers would raise no objection to a month's camp for Volunteers, and the other difficulties which were apparent had been disposed of by the increased grant of pay. He was sure the Committee must have heard with great satisfaction the proposals of

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the right hon. Gentleman as to the increase of the Volunteers, who he thought would be greatly improved under the new plans, which would bring them in connection with Regular officers. It was to be hoped that there would be no undue expenditure of time with regard to the time spent in camp on mere parade drill, but that there would be great attention paid to actual field duty and musketry practice, which was indeed of the greatest importance. He had just one word to say as to the permanent steps that ought to be taken regarding the Volunteers. It was not merely an emergency we had to deal with. We had to look to the better organisation of the force. He was glad to see that a grant was proposed for ranges. That was distinctly a local question. Proximity was everything. The Military Land Act would admit of reform in this direction, and he would suggest that communication should be opened with the municipalities and other local authorities, who might be permitted to render aid to the Volunteer service by local contributions. Headquarters with means for drill were also most desirable, and that was a point on which Volunteers took the greatest interest. He was glad that transport was being provided. With respect to the organisation at the War Office, he said there should be direct representation of the Volunteers by some one who had a knowledge of the conditions and difficulties of the force. He approved of the statement of his hon. friend that there should be provision for exemption from juries. The Volunteers gave their time for nothing to the service of the State, and it was very hard that they should also be called upon to give their time for civil employment as well. There was a growing demand among Volunteers themselves for an enlargement of the Volunteer Act of 1863. The Volunteers did not wish to wait for embodiment or otherwise until there was a possibility of actual invasion. They desired to feel themselves part of the actual army of the country, and to be prepared, by proper training and equipment, to take their part whenever their services might be required.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcubrightshire) said he understood from what had been stated that if one-half of a regiment went into camp the capitation grant would be given to that half. He should

like to know if the regiment would get the capitation grant on the old footing on which they had been accustomed to get it in the past years.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.) replied that they would.

SIR MARK STEWART remarked that the question of rifle ranges was a most important matter. In many counties there were quite sufficient rifle ranges for all needs, even the Militia as well as the Volunteers. If a small sum was allowed for the transport of men it would assist very largely in giving Volunteers and Militiamen far more opportunity for proving themselves competent in carbine shooting than at present. It would cost the country a very small sum. The Volunteers experienced a difficulty in getting good officers. He could not help feeling that a large number of men imbued with military ardour would come forward when the present war was over and make their services available as Volunteer officers. It would do great good to the Volunteers to know that they were being commanded by men who had had actual experience in the field.

MR. SEELY congratulated the Government on the great increase in the Volunteers, which they were right in anticipating, and also on the spirit with which this year they had dealt with the training of the Volunteers and the general demands of that force. He was very glad that they were making it quite clear that the training they were asking this year was an emergency proposal. It was very desirable that it should not be considered a permanent demand for a longer period in camp, partly on account of the men themselves, but still more on account of their employers. The Volunteers could not in many cases afford either the time or the money for a longer time in camp, nor could they get permission from their employers to leave their work for any considerably longer period than at the present time. At this time, in the peculiar circumstances of the country, with practically the whole Regular Army abroad, there would be no difficulty in finding men willing to come themselves, or able to obtain leave from their employers

to attend in camp for whatever time the Government considered necessary to render them thoroughly efficient. He did not want the War Office to think that any success they might have had in obtaining a longer period in camp this year from the Volunteers would make it desirable to have it in future. Having these two forces—the Militia and the Volunteers—it would be a pity to make arrangements for the Volunteers which would prevent the class of men who now belonged to them from joining them, and which would make them more in the nature of the Militia than at present. There were sufficient numbers available for both forces. With regard to the places where the Volunteers go into camp, it was very desirable, and it would be liked by the Volunteers, that they should be sent—he did not say every year, but every now and then—either to the actual places or somewhere in the neighbourhood of the places where they would be sent in case of mobilisation, there being, he believed, at the War Office a general scheme of mobilisation for the Volunteers. He suggested that every four or five years regiments should be sent to these places, so that the officers and men might get to know the country in the neighbourhood where their services might be required. He concurred with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen as to the very great importance of the adequate training of Volunteer officers, and with that view the War Office ought to give greater facilities for officers attending the excellent military schools. They should also consider whether, in cases where officers could not attend the schools, some arrangement might be made for local training. He was glad the Government were realising the importance of providing ranges. He impressed upon them that it was very desirable they should get ranges as near as possible to the homes of the Volunteers. He had the impression that it was of enormous value that a man should be, so to speak, at home with his weapon and know it thoroughly, and a man could only be in that position from constantly using it. The Volunteers could only do that if they had ranges near to their homes. He congratulated the Government on what the Under Secretary has said about sending some officers to Switzerland to inquire into the system of short ranges existing

in that country and the method of making them safe. That showed that the Government appreciated the value of having ranges near home. All Volunteers would feel that this Government had taken considerable interest in them, and this year they were obviously doing their best to make themselves efficient in every possible way.

MR. DRAGE (Derby) spoke of the enormous advantage a military and industrial community was likely to reap from the development of the Volunteer force. He supported the view of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen that with a proper development of the Volunteer force we should reap the same advantages that foreign countries derived from their military systems. Discipline, such as was obtained in military training, had an effect on the mind, character, and methods of a man which were of great value in the ordinary avocations of civil life. If the right hon. Gentleman had developed his point a little further he would have been able to show the Committee how it was that this development of the Volunteer movement was bound up with nearly every social question with which we had to deal. There were three points which had to be considered in connection with the development of the Volunteer force, namely, first, how we shall avoid industrial loss by taking men away from labour for a long period; second, how we are to get men and train them; and third, how in connection with this system of Volunteers at home we may be able to institute a connection with the Volunteer system in the colonies. He wished to say a word on the training of the men from the purely industrial point of view. He urged the desirability of getting, if possible, in connection with any large scheme of Volunteer reform, into touch with the schools, pointing to the valuable example of the United States, where boys on the occasion of great national festivals heard speeches with regard to the national heroes and so forth. If we had in connection with the elementary and secondary schools a system of military training, it seemed to him that we should increase the flow of men into the Volunteer service we so much desired. It was true, as the hon. Member for South-east Essex had said, that there was hardly room in the Volunteer force

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for every man who desired to enter it, but he trusted that provision would be made for a larger increase than had taken place this year. The Government would have to face some form of organisation which might prevent the Volunteers who had been in South Africa going into the ranks of the unemployed, and coming upon the rates. He suggested that there should be in connection with the Volunteer force some sort of old age pension scheme. He had opposed old age pensions from the first on the ground that the people who were to receive the pensions had not given some sort of public service. Some would be glad to welcome an old age pension scheme which would be conditional upon giving service in the Volunteer force, because we should then see that public service had been rendered for the pension given. With respect to representation of the Volunteers at the War Office, he said, if the reformers in that House got their way and got decentralisation established, that would be very valuable in connection with the Volunteer movement.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford): I do not know that I entirely agree with what has been said as to the industrial value of the military discipline to which young men on the Continent are subjected. I do not mean exactly that I object on the ground of their withdrawal from industrial life, though that, of course, is very important indeed. In my judgment it is to a great extent due to our not having the Continental system that we are able to pay for a very expensive war, that we are richer than other countries, and that we can on an emergency procure men and material in a way other countries cannot. Another feature of our military system is this. Half a dozen redcoats can put an English mob to flight. It is different on the Continent, where every man is a trained soldier. I was an original Volunteer, and in those days it was a force to which the middle class largely belonged. Now there are in the Volunteer force many young men who, if that force did not exist, would be in the Militia or the Regular Army. It is sometimes said that the Volunteer force is a sham. One does not like to say that the Volunteer force is a sham, but yet a great many people think so. One does not like to depreciate the Volunteer force,

with all their energy and self-denial. There was a time when the country and the War Office never thought the Volunteers would be of the least use. Neither the country nor the War Office have ever thought that the Volunteers would be much use. If the War Office had thought so they would have provided proper means of transport, made the Volunteers a mobile force, and not allocated them to certain kopjes around the metropolis, and armed them with obsolete guns. The chief lesson of the war has been that a comparatively small body of what used to be called "sharpshooters," men who could shoot straight, can defend their country very successfully against a foe armed with the best modern weapons. If the War Office nerved themselves to the task of forming the Volunteers into a mobile force of 50,000 men, able to shoot straight, and armed with the best guns, they would do more to render this country safe against invasion, or even the fear of invasion, than by any project of making the Volunteers approach more nearly to the Regulars. With regard to the facilities for learning the art of shooting straight, I was referred the other day to a Return issued last year, from which I find that within the last ten years there have been 536 ranges closed, and only 205 new ranges opened, leaving a balance to the bad of 331. I recently asked for information as to whether the Volunteer corps, county and borough councils had availed themselves, and if so to what extent, of the provisions of the Ranges Act of 1891, and I was told I could move for a Return because so many inquiries would be necessitated. In my innocence of military matters I supposed that this information would be at the War Office, and that it would be a clerk's work for a few hours to prepare a reply to my question. But it appears that the information, although most important, is not in the possession of the War Office. We have been told that certain officers are being sent to Switzerland to make inquiries about the ranges there. What are they going for? Perhaps to buy some mountains to put at the back of the targets in this country. I always thought there was an Intelligence Department connected with the War Office, of which the primary duty would be to keep the authorities fully informed of the doings of other countries in this important matter. But it is now, at the eleventh

hour, after our men have been shot down in consequence of the superiority of the firing of the enemy, that officers are to be sent to a little country like Switzerland to make inquiries which ought to have been made years ago. Forty-two years ago a pamphlet was written on "England's Dormant Strength," in which my father advocated the very thing the War Office now propose to do. At that time it was the opinion of the people that these men were to be riflemen. This is a very glaring instance of the negligence of the War Office. We were told the other day that behind our targets it was necessary to have a butt 200 feet wide.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The answer I gave was that with the existing rifle it is necessary in a range of 1,000 yards to have another 2,000 yards behind the range as a safety zone.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE: That is precisely what I was going to say, but what the hon. Gentleman calls a "zone of safety" I call a "butt." You have to purchase land for that purpose, which makes the cost of long ranges almost prohibitive. But shorter sites could easily be obtained. Although I have a strong belief in long distance shooting, yet it is well known that the greatest mortality occurs at between 300 and 500 yards, and if a man can shoot properly at that range he will be a very much better shot at a longer distance than a man who has not had the opportunity of shooting at even 500 yards. Instead of the War Office sending officers to Switzerland they should depend on our local authorities, and ascertain from them where in their respective neighbourhoods such likely sites are to be found.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: I think there is a great difficulty in the matter of policy in regard to the Volunteers, and for this reason—it is a force not created by responsible authority and determined by the conditions of our situation. It was spontaneously imposed in a time of panic in 1859. I am one of those who rejoice that we have got the Volunteer force we have, and I am distinctly in favour of promoting in every way the efficiency of that force, and encouraging it in every possible way. But if the policy of the War Office is simply the policy which rests upon the theory originally adopted—namely, the fear of

a gigantic invasion by a foreign Power—then I say their policy is wrong, and if you are pursuing that policy you are making a mistake. I take it upon this ground: It must be remembered that in order to exist as an Empire we must have naval supremacy which will absolutely prevent any great invasion. I am free to confess, looking at it from a practical point of view, you must contemplate raids here and there. Therefore the organisation of the Volunteer force in the future appears to me to be this—that as far as the question of the defence of these shores goes they have to be organised for the purpose of meeting not a great invasion but possibly worrying raids here and there. They may be few, but you have got to organise against attack in that way. I notice that the policy of the War Office seems to be to treat the force as a great army to be prepared to meet another great army. You must bear in mind that to get the best of your population into the ranks of the Volunteers it is necessary to remember that the units have only got a certain amount of time to give, and you must aim at getting individual efficiency. Whether as artillerymen or riflemen, your aim should be to make the Volunteers a great school for teaching individual efficiency as military units. The Volunteers who go into camp take their cash into consideration. They make a sacrifice, and they have got their wives and children to consider, and they combine their military training with their outing, and they generally choose places of popular resort. Yarmouth is one of the places which they choose, and there is a tremendous demand from the Midland and Northern counties from Volunteers to come to Yarmouth. They go into camp there in brigades, and the men give their whole time to military training, but their families are often there too, and they combine their holiday with the camp training. But if you are going to bring the Volunteers together in large camps as great armies on Salisbury Plain and elsewhere, you must recollect that you are asking the men to do more than they have ever done before, for you are asking them to give up the ordinary system of combining their holiday for their families and themselves with their military training. I cannot help thinking that the War Office are not considering the instincts of human nature sufficiently in a programme of

Sir John Colomb.

getting Volunteers for any length of time to go into these very large camps, where they will be separated not merely from their employment, but from their families at the very time when they usually take their holidays. I cannot see the object of getting very large bodies of Volunteers together. The efficiency of the individual Volunteer can be assured far better under other conditions than in huge camps. The object of huge camps is not to improve the training of units, but it is to improve the superior officers. Company training is necessary for units, and it is necessary to bring companies into battalion for the training of those who command them, but I do take exception to the collecting of Volunteers into divisions and army corps in camp under the idea that you are improving the individual unit of the Volunteers. All you are doing is to use the individual units to give the superior officers special knowledge of dealing with masses of men, and I think when you do that you are doing something which is likely to make the Volunteer force unpopular, if you use Volunteers as a sort of machinery merely for the training of superior officers. As a policy it appears to me the proper course is to give convenient facilities free of expense to Volunteer officers for them to learn their business as officers with regular troops in regular camps, and to use the local means afforded in every district, and make it as convenient as possible for Volunteer non-commissioned officers and men to become efficient with the least inconvenience to themselves, with the least separation from their employment, and with the least separation from their families. I cannot say myself that I am satisfied at all with the policy, as I understand it, which is being pursued by the War Office. I think there is too much looking at Volunteers as if they were not men but machines, and the Government proposals place too much reliance upon the supposition that the men are not only going to sacrifice their holidays, their families, but also employment to go into large camps. As every officer knows, the training in large camps is more useful for the officers than for the men themselves. If the policy of the War Office is that the Volunteer force must be prepared to act as a huge army to meet another huge army on these shores, then I say that is a blunder, and cannot be justified scientifically. If, on the other hand, the reason-

able possibilities are considered, and the Volunteer force is to answer its true purpose—which is that it shall be a mobile force organised in such a way that each district shall have its own coast line allotted to it, together with the necessary hinterland of that coast line, and shall have all the local knowledge and military machinery necessary for resisting a sudden worrying small raid—then we know where we are. That is my view, and I think it is the true view, but I cannot discover that it is the view of the War Office. Recollect what that means. You group your Volunteer forces into small complete mobile bodies according to the nature of the coast line and the hinterland. You group them as a mobile local force organised for the defence of that particular portion of coast. You can always, if necessary, bring these military groups of organised force together, just as you can bring battalions into brigades or into divisions. Having provided against a worrying raid in each district you should next lay yourselves out for providing the local means within each district of efficiently training your units. Having done this, remember the Volunteer Army is a great reserve of trained units upon which you can rely in a great emergency to volunteer to go anywhere and do anything. That appears to me to be the true view, and if you put too much strain upon the individual Volunteers to get them to a pitch of perfection—which you have no right to expect under the conditions you are now offering—you make a mistake. With regard to the training of the individual units, I wish to endeavour to get some information as to what the Government intend really to do about their ammunition. I want to know if they are going to supply a sufficiency of free ammunition. There is an impression abroad that the Government are contemplating giving very freely ammunition to Lord Wemyss's Reserve Volunteers, but the limits have not been stated. Is there to be an unlimited supply of free ammunition to Reserve and not to Active Volunteers? I am told the Government are too niggardly with regard to the supply of ammunition to the Volunteers actually serving in the ranks. Perhaps my hon. friend will clear that point up in his reply. It is a fact, I presume, that the policy of the Government is that the Reserve Volunteers shall have free ammunition.

I should much like to know whether the War Office intends to increase to any considerable degree the quantity of free ammunition to the Volunteers actually serving. I do not think I need trouble the Committee any further, except to repeat that the policy of the War Office should be to group or organise the Volunteers by smaller districts, to encourage by every possible means the individual training of the units, and to give the officers every opportunity at Aldershot and all the other military centres of learning their business as officers with the regular troops. By these means you would greatly increase the efficiency of officers and men of the Volunteers.

DR. TANNER drew attention to the fact that, while under Headings A. and B. the amount of the Estimate had increased from £259,200 to £568,000, or more than doubled, only £300 of that increase went to the pay of the adjutants connected with the Volunteer force, while the pay of the sergeant instructor had only gone up by £1,500. This point was certainly worthy of explanation. In connection with the total Vote, it was a great injustice that while Ireland had to contribute a large proportion of the £1,230,000 to be provided from taxation, there was no such thing as a Volunteer corps in that country. It was suggested that there should be a regiment of Irish Guards, and yet the authorities would not allow a regiment of Irish Volunteers to be formed. The present state of things was cruel and unjust, and the Irish representatives would not be doing their duty if they permitted this Vote to pass without raising their voices in protest. If the Irish people were not worthy of possessing rifles, it was to be hoped that at some future time they might have rifles with or without the assistance of any English Government.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): This Vote deserves considerable attention from the Committee. When Irish Members of Parliament are called upon to vote £1,250,000 for the support of Volunteers in this country, the question naturally arises why the Irish people are not allowed any part in the Volunteer movement. In my opinion, the Volunteer force is the most deserving branch of the whole military strength of the Crown in this country. Nothing

could be more admirable from your point of view than the way in which thousands of young men give up the only afternoon in the week at their disposal in order to take part in this movement. But how can we Irish be asked to vote this money, a considerable proportion of which will come from Irish taxpayers, when the insulting stigma and slur is cast upon our countrymen of depriving them of that right of volunteering which is given to the inhabitants of Great Britain? So strongly do I feel on this point that I shall move a reduction of the Vote, and press it to a division. Why are not the citizens of Ireland permitted to bear arms? Is it because there is some idea that if they did bear arms they would, while defending their country, still see that Ireland received all the rights to which she is entitled, just as did the Irish Volunteers of a hundred years ago, when they insisted on the independence of their country? It is a matter of history that that force was one of the finest that ever assembled in any country in the world. But that was before the Union, and ever since then the system of rule has been such that, with the exception of those who through lack of employment generally join the Regular Army, the citizens of Ireland have been refused the right to bear arms. As long as that right is withheld no one can say with justice that the Irish people are satisfied or contented, or that the Irish representatives are not justified in protesting against this Vote as unjust and unfair. Why were English regiments sent to Ireland to replace the troops withdrawn for service abroad? Doubtless to form a garrison for the protection of Ireland. There were many rumours of foreign complications. Supposing those foreign complications occurred. Are we to be told that if our country is invaded we are to be obliged to hide behind the skirts of the—I almost called them soldiers—members of the Militia battalions which have been sent to Ireland? The very idea is a positive insult. We ought to be allowed to raise our own Volunteer battalions. If such an order were issued to-morrow it would be received with enthusiasm, and the young men of the country would make sacrifices of time and money just as do the young men of Great Britain. I do not for a moment believe that the establishment of a Volunteer corps in Ireland would give dissatisfaction to anybody who

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really desired the welfare of our country. I do not believe for a single moment that the men who would form the Volunteer battalions in Ireland would be a bit false to the conditions under which they joined. They would join, not for service abroad, but would hand themselves together to guard the foreshores of Ireland from foreign invasion. Over a hundred years ago this country was pressed by the threatening aspect of affairs in France and the Continent generally. At that time the Irish people were allowed to join their gallant battalions, and but for that there would probably have been an invasion of Ireland. Why are they not allowed to do so at the present time? We are told that all the penal enactments against Ireland have been removed, that one by one all the inequalities between British men and Irish men have been extinguished, and that there is nothing of which Irishmen can legitimately complain. There is much to complain of; but if there is nothing else we have a right to complain that while Englishmen are allowed to band together as Volunteers, Irishmen are not. I maintain that that is a badge of inferiority and inequality, and an indication that the Government of this country are not satisfied that the Irish are content. I would point out what an utterly absurd position this rule of law in regard to Irish Volunteers brings us to. An Irishman in Dublin is not allowed to bear arms, an Irishman in my constituency is hardly allowed the use of a fowling-piece—

*THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Gentleman that in the course of his observations he has repeated himself several times.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: With very great respect to you, Mr. Wodehouse, I am sorry I cannot agree with your ruling. [HON. MEMBERS: Order, order!]

*THE CHAIRMAN: I am occupant of the Chair for the time being, and I am entitled to the respect generally accorded to the Chair.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: It is very far from me to show disrespect to the Chair. The very fact that you are not the regular Chairman is the very

reason why I should not do so. I merely desire to point out, Sir, that I do not think I was repeating myself. [HON. MEMBERS: Order, order!] That is a matter of opinion, but I will endeavour not to do so. However, I will say something now that I did not say before, and if my remarks are curtailed there is an hon. friend of mine who will probably succeed me. [Laughter, and cries of "Order!"] Any interference with me will not conduce to facilitating the debate, still less will the interference on the part of the hon. and gallant Colonel opposite. [HON. MEMBERS: Order, order!]

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: Do you mean me?

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Yes, you!

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: I rise to order, Mr. Wodehouse. I made no remark of any sort whatever, and the allusion of the hon. Gentleman is uncalled for and unnecessary.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: If the hon. and gallant Gentleman wishes me to explain what I mean I will do so.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: Certainly.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: When I was not in this House, when my back was turned, the hon. and gallant Gentleman made sneering references to what he was pleased to call the treason I had talked in this House. The next time he has observations of that kind to make he should make them to my face. I repeat nothing under the privilege of this House that I would not say outside. I do not shelter myself under the privilege of this House in the slightest degree. I have said outside what I have said here, and I have been punished and imprisoned for the expression of my sentiments, and I will repeat them again. What the hon. and gallant Gentleman thinks treason we consider loyalty to our country. The absurdity of the rule against Volunteering in Ireland is exemplified by the fact that, whereas any one of my constituents in the county of Clare, though physically far superior to the ordinary Englishman, is not allowed to bear arms there, and an Irishman

in Dublin is not allowed to bear arms there, let my constituent or a Dublin Irishman take the steamer and come to London and offer himself, with his fine physical advantages, as a member of the London Irish or London Scottish, as many Irishmen do, or any English Volunteer corps, he is gladly accepted. [HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!] Yes, hon. Members cry "Hear, hear"; and what is the difference between an Irishman in Dublin and an Irishman in London? The crossing of the Channel does not make an Irishman into an Englishman, but directly he comes here he is allowed to join the Volunteer force. Why is that? I call on the Under Secretary to state in his usual plain and candid fashion why it is that Irishmen in Ireland have this degradation put upon them, and why Irishmen in other parts of the world are allowed equal privileges and rights in this matter with the other subjects of the British Empire. I ask the Under Secretary to show, if he can, if it is for any reason except that old distrust and that ill-feeling of misgiving about the contentment of the Irish people. Apart from the Irish point of view, I maintain that if the British desire to stand well with the people of the world, if they wish to prove that Ireland is a pacified country, they should allow Irishmen to bear arms in defence of their country as they allow Englishmen to do; and as long as they do not do so, no impartial people throughout the world can say that Ireland is fairly and equally treated by this country. To mark the strong feeling which I have on this matter I beg to move the reduction of this Vote of £1,230,000 for the Volunteer forces by the sum of £30,000. I may say, as an additional reason for doing so, apart from the Irish question, that I think the whole arrangements of the present Government in regard to the Volunteer forces are perfectly absurd. What are the proposals of the Government this year in regard to the Volunteer forces? They are to be invited to go under canvas for two or three months in order to be trained to become capable defenders of the country. Why, a more utterly preposterous proposition was never heard to emanate from any Government at any time. Who in his senses imagines that the Volunteers, or any considerable proportion of the Volunteers of Great

Britain, could give two or three months of their time to go under canvas? Everybody knows that they could not do anything of the kind. In the first place, however willing, they could not possibly get the time, nor could their employers keep their positions open two or three months at a stretch. A great number are clerks, young men engaged in ordinary commercial pursuits. Many occupy extremely subordinate positions in big commercial firms. Who is to do their business while they are away under canvas? And what is to become of their situations after they have done with their training? Will the employers dismiss the men who had been temporarily engaged? The very idea is impractical and utterly unworthy of any Department such as the War Office. Then the Militia battalions are asked to come up for a month or so every year in the ordinary course of affairs, but this year they are asked to attend drill for six months. This is not the Vote for the Militia, and I will not pursue that line of argument further, except to say that they might be able to do so; but I utterly deny that the Volunteers, or any considerable proportion of them, could leave their occupations to put in two or three months training under canvas. Why is this proposition in regard to the Volunteers made? It is made because it is necessary to have some force in this country, and because the Government have not the courage to admit that they are drifting to conscription. I hold that this proposal in regard to the Volunteers is nothing but conscription in a modified form. These young men entered the Volunteer battalions under the condition that every Saturday afternoon they would devote to drill, and that once a year they would go under canvas for a week's training. Now they are suddenly told, without a word of warning, that the Saturday afternoon is not enough, and eight days under canvas at Easter is not enough, but that they are to come out for a month's drill as well. That is a proposal that is useless and must break down. The Volunteers themselves do not approve of it. I see that quite a number of Volunteer company officers have expressed the view that such a long period of training cannot be done. A more absurd proposal to meet the present crisis was never made, and on that ground

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also I move the reduction of the Vote; and I would do it every time as long as my countrymen have not the right of freemen to defend their own shores.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,200,000, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny) seconded the motion of his hon. friend. He thought that all the professions so constantly made of the desire on the part of the English Government to do justice to Ireland, and the professions of belief in the loyalty of the Irish people, were unblushing lies when at the same time Irishmen were told that they could not defend their own shores. His hon. friend had pointed out that a citizen of Dublin was not entrusted to have arms, but if he took a short trip of two and a half hours, and landed in this country, with a month's residence he might become a Volunteer. Could any one outside the House of Commons—where they were willing to believe anything they were told—could the people of any European country believe—could they themselves believe that an Irishman could not be trusted to hold a rifle except at a distance of two and a half hours journey from his own shores? He did not believe in the sincerity of all the praise that had been lavished upon his unfortunate countrymen who were fighting Britain's unworthy battles in South Africa, when they were not willing to let them get a training at home. He had all the admiration hon. Gentlemen opposite had expressed for the Volunteers in England. They were splendid men, and he gave them credit for real patriotism and a desire to obtain a knowledge of the use of arms, so that when the day came when this country was invaded—as he believed it would be sooner than some anticipated—they would be prepared; but surely Irishmen should also have the right to protect their own country from the invader. He argued that if they trusted the Irish people, and if they called upon them to pay to keep up a system of defence, they should put into their hands the weapons necessary for their own protection. So long as they insisted on having Volunteers in Great Britain, and Great Britain got the advantage of these Volunteers, then their cost

should be made an exclusive charge on Great Britain. He supposed they would be told that Irishmen got all the advantages of the British Empire, but they did not even send a ship to Ireland to get the barnacles scraped off her bottom.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I call the attention of the hon. Member to the fact that his remarks are not directly relevant to this Vote.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN said he had great pleasure in seeing Mr. Wodehouse in the Chair, but he was arguing for a Volunteer force in Ireland. The provision of the Volunteer force was for Great Britain, and Great Britain ought to pay for it. He wanted the Under Secretary, with all his sweetness and light, to get up and argue why Irishmen should pay for a Volunteer force which they themselves did not get. It was a cardinal doctrine of the Liberal party that taxation ought to be accompanied by representation, and he argued that if Irishmen had to pay for a Volunteer force they ought to have a Volunteer force in Ireland. He did not want to evade the Chairman's ruling, but if his fellow countrymen were worth praising in South Africa, they should begin at home and teach the boys the use of the rifle. If they took away the Irish generals and the Irishmen who secured the victories for the generals, he wanted to know where Great Britain would be. It was Ireland all along the line. In the face of that, were they going to send out a message to the Irishmen in South Africa, whom they were bespattering with praise, to tell them that they could wear the shamrock—if they could get it and pay the cost of it—but that they were not allowed to be Volunteers at home? He was not without hope—and he said it deliberately—that the day would come when they would rue that they had left the fighting population of Ireland without a knowledge of arms.

*MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) said he wished to bear a tribute to the gallantry of the Irish soldiers in South Africa; but he reminded the Committee that Scottish soldiers had also borne the heat and the burden of the day with equal, if not greater, heroism. He represented a district in which there was a population of 100,000, and in which they

had no Volunteers. And why? Because the Airdrie Volunteers were shamefully disbanded, and because the late Secretary for War—he did not refer to the present Secretary, who was quite a different gentleman—for the purpose of making a humorous and sarcastic speech in this House, threw unmerited disgrace upon 800 gallant men. He had asked for an inquiry at the time, and if that had been granted it would have been found that it was not the fault of the Volunteers, but of the adjutant, who told a number of deliberate falsehoods in regard to the matter. [HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!] He insisted upon an inquiry, and he would not retract his words, because he could prove them on oath. It was the fault of one or two officers. He had gone to the adjutant-general, Sir Redvers Buller, and told him that if he had any fault to find with two or three officers let him dismiss them, but not disband the whole regiment of 800 men, and throw an odium on the whole district which had furnished so many gallant men to fight the battles of their country in India and South Africa. He could assure the Under Secretary for War that some of the very officers of the regiment which he had disbanded were fighting at the present moment in South Africa. The Under Secretary ought to say a word to the present Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, who was an old fossil. [HON. MEMBERS: Withdraw!] He would not withdraw. It was the truth, and he would not withdraw. When he was asked to report whether a corps of Volunteers could be got up, he said there were no officers in a district where there were 100,000 population, and he asked for a word of encouragement from the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. F. W. WILSON (Norfolk, Mid) drew attention to the position of the sergeant-majors in the Volunteers. Although some of them had been in the Army for twenty years, they were only colour-sergeants, and had not the status or pay of a sergeant-major, whose duty they were now performing. Their pay was only 3s. a day, compared to 4s. 6d. received by sergeant-majors of Militia. They received 6d. extra a day pay, 9d. for lodgings, and 3½d. a day for fuel and light, whereas a Militia sergeant-major received 1s. 4d. for lodgings and 6d. for fuel and light, with the rank of captain.

master-sergeant. He trusted the Secretary of State for War would see his way to improve the position of a highly qualified body of men, who fulfilled duties so arduous and important in the training of our Volunteers.

MR. WYNDHAM: I think that the time has come to remind the hon. Member who spoke last that I cannot go further than I did earlier in the afternoon when I said that the position of the permanent staff would be carefully considered; beyond that I cannot go. I very much regret what has been said by the hon. Member for Falkirk, and I assure the hon. Member that I hope the time will come when the War Office will be able to give back to the district the privilege of raising a regiment.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): Why not now?

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member will see he is putting an impediment in his path by the use of expressions in reference to the general officer commanding, which, I feel sure, the hon. Member will regret having used. I know the hon. Member feels strongly upon this subject, and certainly the district contains excel-

lent raw material for a corps of Volunteers. Undoubtedly they are a fine set of men. As to the speeches from Irish Members, they raise issues above my province and capabilities. These things are too high for me. They are questions of policy with which it is not for me to deal. I trust that the Committee will now come to a decision.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND protested against the Vote, and pointed out that inasmuch as there were no Volunteers in Ireland it was unfair to make the Irish pay anything towards their cost. It was a matter in which the Irish taxpayers had no interest, and should not be called on to pay a farthing for the maintenance of the Volunteers. He challenged the Committee to say that this protest was unjust, and contended that although the amount which Ireland would be called on to pay was not large, it was one of the many instances that proved the gross injustice of the system of taxation applied to Ireland. The Irish never saw a Volunteer in their country from the day they were born to the time they went to their graves.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 8; Noes, 123. (Division List No. 72.)

AYES.

Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Doogan, P. C.
Kilbride, Denis
Macaleese, Daniel

Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donald (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Weir, James Galloway

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Captain Donelan and Mr.
Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manchester)
Banbury, Fredk. George
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. S. (Hunts)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worcester)
Channing, Francis Allston
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Cooke, C. W. R. (Hereford)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)

Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
Crombie, John William
Curzon, Viscount
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Faber, George Denison
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manchester)
Finch, George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Garfit, William
Gibbs, H. N. A. G. H. (City of London)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Alban's)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon

Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Heath, James
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Howell, William Tudor
Jessel, Captain Herbert M.
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Sir E. Darnley (Cornwall)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool)
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
McCrae, George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip

Mr. F. W. Wilson.

Monk, Charles James
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Dorset)
 Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plunkett, Rt. Hon. H. Curzon
 Purvis, Robert
 Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. T.

Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudiey
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Stephens, Henry Charles
 Stewart, Sir M. J. M. Taggart
 Strauss, Arthur
 Stuart, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.

Wason, Eugene
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. ACE (Taunton)
 Welby, Sir C. G. E. (Notts.)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Williams, Joseph Powell (Bir.)
 Wilson, Fredk. W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
 Wyndham, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

DR. TANNER called attention to an item of £300 which appeared in the Estimates, in reference to which he desired some explanation, to which as a mere matter of business he was entitled. In default of some explanation he would have to trouble the Committee by pressing for another division.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next.

Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

SUPPLY [13TH MARCH] REPORT.

Resolutions reported:—

CIVIL SERVICES (EXCESS), 1898-9.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £10, be granted to Her Majesty, to make good an Excess on the Grant for Prisons, England and the Colonies, for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1899."

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

2. "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 430,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £15,200,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Resolutions read a second time.

First Resolution agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Second Resolution."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE asked whether the Government intended to persist in taking the Money Vote this evening.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE pointed out that it might entail a considerable amount of discussion. It not only dealt with an enormous sum of money, but involved new principles; and although he did not intend to take part in the discussion himself, he thought the House should be given a fuller opportunity to discuss it than was given in Committee.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) called attention to the injustice which was being done to the Royal Military Academy and the Royal Military College by the way in which commissions were being given at present to fill up the vacancies in the Army. He reminded the House that the cadets in these colleges had undergone expensive and laborious preparation to obtain their present position after the most severe competition, and they had every reason to expect that they would in due course receive their commissions with that seniority which justly belonged to them. Now, unfortunately, on account of the war, a great many vacancies had occurred in the Army, and it was proposed by the War Office to bring in a great number of persons

who had no military training at all, and who must supersede those cadets in all time coming, and reduce their seniority in the Army. By bringing in University and public school boys over the heads of the cadets who were undergoing a very severe preparation at Woolwich and Sandhurst, the cadets would be treated unfairly. He would give one or two instances of the way in which this would operate. Candidates who had failed in the competitive examinations for Woolwich were now actually receiving commissions in priority and supersession of the very cadets who had beaten them in the examinations, and they would be above them in the Army in all time coming. There was one who could not keep up with his class at Woolwich, and who was advised to leave. He did leave, and now he had received priority over the cadets with whom he was in competition at Woolwich. Take the case of the public school boys. There were cadets at Sandhurst who came from the public schools. Some of them had been in the Volunteer corps at these public schools, and now the boys who were being brought into the Army from the public schools, and who were actually the juniors of the cadets at Sandhurst, and who had received no military preparation would supersede them in all time coming in the Army. His hon. friend the other night said the university men would probably be older than the cadets of the Military College, and that the colonials whom he selected for direct commissions would presumably be older than the cadets. That might be so, but a young man of nineteen who had received a year or a year and a-half of military instruction was fitter to take a place in the Army than a young man with university education or colonial experience who had no military experience at all. The case was much stronger as regards the public schools. He did not ask the Government to overthrow the scheme altogether. He thought it would be fair that these cadets should have their commissions antedated. They were virtually in Her Majesty's service now, and they should not be superseded by men who had no military education at all. There was another class of commissions being given just now which, he ventured to say, was not really just. There were a great many Militiamen serving in South Africa at

this moment. There were some Militia officers attached to regiments of the Line, and there were some who had been through a series of actions lately who were attached to regiments of the Line. These officers were not receiving the vacancies in the Line battalions in South Africa, even in the Line battalions of their own regiments, but junior officers were being sent out to fill up the appointments. He gave the other day a short list of the cases which had been sent to him—cases in which junior officers had been sent out from home to fill places in the Line in preference to the Militia officers serving in the field. He was aware that officers commanding Militia regiments in South Africa had been allowed to recommend one officer from each battalion, but unfortunately there were more than one vacancy in each line battalion, and although one officer might be given a commission there were others who might fitly be transferred to the vacancies in the Line battalions. He could not understand why that was not done. It was desired, no doubt, to fill up the vacancies in the speediest possible manner, but that might be done by appointing the officers already in the field. He trusted his hon. friend would press the military authorities on this matter. He was asking no more than a simple measure of justice which was calculated to encourage those serving in the field to give their best services to the country. It was a peculiarly hard case for those Militia officers in the field in South Africa to see juniors coming from home and going over their heads into positions which they would only be able to get into by competition. They would be thrust back, he did not know how long, and certainly when they did enter the Army they would rank below those who had been sent out from home. He had said enough to show that there was a case for reconsideration both as regards the cadets and the Militia.

*COLONEL MILWARD (Warwickshire, Stratford-upon-Avon) supported the right hon. Member for North-east Manchester in saying that in regard to young officers and the filling up of vacancies he thought that at the present moment great injury was being done. He quite sympathised with the War Office in the work they had to do. Every move they made at the War Office affected a great many pieces besides the one they were moving. The War

Sir J. Fergusson.

Office authorities were so busy at present that they could not properly give time to consider all the subjects which had been referred to. At the same time the position of young officers, who at great expense to their parents, and with great industry on their own part, were qualifying for commissions, should not be injured by men who entered the Army in other ways. He thought the commissions of the young cadets at Sandhurst and Woolwich might be antedated so that a real wrong might not be inflicted upon them.

MR. BUCHANAN said it was announced a few weeks ago that Sir F. Carrington had been appointed to a command in South Africa. No official announcement had been made as to what the command he would hold was; but in the newspapers it was said that he would be in command of the Rhodesia Field Force. Was this force included in the forces now being voted? He should also like to know what the numbers were, by whom they were to be paid, what was the rate of pay, and what services they were to discharge. It had been stated in *The Times* and other newspapers that their duties were to be mainly outside the Free State and the Transvaal.

SIR CHARLES CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness) expressed the opinion that a great wrong would be done to the cadets if on passing out they had not their commissions antedated. He felt sure this matter would receive due consideration at the War Office. It would be a great hardship if these young fellows, who had passed well in their examinations, should find on taking their places in the Army that the boys who were below them in school were put above them.

MR. WYNDHAM said he would try to reply as far as he could to the Member for East Aberdeenshire. The question he had asked might with equal propriety be put with reference to any brigadier in South Africa. The Vote of men here taken was an outside margin embracing all the troops which had been raised, and it included the force of Sir F. Carrington. The hon. Member asked the question because of something he had read in the newspapers. He had to inform the hon. Member that a great deal of what he read in the newspapers was not always exhaustive. He emphati-

cally declined, from the gravest considerations of public policy, to start that evening a most unfortunate precedent—namely, to give the numbers or the composition of any force under any officer and the theatre of operations in which he was likely to operate. He was sure that the Leader of the Opposition would see that this was the reasonable, and, indeed, the only, position he could take up. With the other question raised by his right hon. friend the Member for North-east Manchester it was difficult to deal, but not because of any doubt he had of the great attention paid to the difficult problem by the Military Secretary. He knew that it had engaged his attention before the pressure of the war and also since the war commenced. He was convinced in his own mind there was no injustice, though he could not discuss the particular cases referred to because they were given without names, and he could not identify them, and as they were given by those who felt themselves aggrieved they did not give all the facts of the situation. Therefore he was driven to reply to the criticisms passed by laying down general propositions. Any suspicion that there was anything in the nature of jobbery or injustice in giving Her Majesty's commissions to young officers would be most deplorable, and as there was no foundation for such suspicion he invited the attention of the House while he dealt with the thing as a whole. He begged the House to consider some of the phrases dropped in the Debate. It was said that parents and guardians of candidates who went to Woolwich had incurred a great deal of expense. Was not that true of the parents of young men who went to Oxford and Cambridge. Take the case of a Militia officer. Was it not true that the parent of an officer in the Militia had to buy his uniform, and that the young man had to remain in that force two years' training? Therefore on the ground of expense he did not think he could draw any distinction between cadets and Militia officers.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I never complained of Militia officers being transferred to the Army.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member was not the only one who spoke on this subject. It had been suggested that the Sandhurst cadet had always a prior claim

to those who came from the Militia. This was rather a large question. The additional commissions that had to be given in excess of what could be given to Sandhurst and Woolwich were over 1,100, and the proposal was to give thirty commissions to school boys, and the fact was that owing to the strain of the war this was a very much bigger thing than it had ever been before. It was, however, an infinitesimal speck of the whole scheme. On the ground of military training it would be conceded that Militia officers had an advantage, while Sandhurst cadets derived great advantage from instruction in many useful branches of the profession, so that those trained at Sandhurst gravitated towards the Staff, while those from the Militia remained excellent regimental officers. There was another general proposition thrown out which deserved more careful consideration, and that was that the date of a candidate's appointment in the Army affected the whole of his career afterwards, and so far as his own regiment was concerned, in a measure that was quite true, but it was not true of the Army as a whole, as anyone would find by looking at the Army List. As the Sandhurst cadet went in young it would be very unjust to handicap the university man who was allowed to go up to the age of thirty. The problem has been brought to the attention of the War Office by the increase of the Army and the great number of officers recently required for the Egyptian Army, for example, and for different parts of Africa. The normal demand a few years ago was for 500 commissions in one year, but long before we even dreamt of this war we were anxiously considering the question. There was some difference of opinion among us. Some of us held that we ought to give 900 commissions, and the lowest estimate put forward by those endeavouring to retrench was 700, so that before there was any question of war at all the number of commissions in a year had risen from 500 to 700. The normal course at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst is one and a half years, and as it accommodates 360 cadets, you can only get from it 240, and if the course is reduced to a year you can get 360. But that hardly helps where there are 700 or 900 commissions to be filled. Therefore, before we had any idea of the

Mr. Wyndham.

war we shortened the term in order to increase the output. This gave us 360, but when the war came upon us some of the Sandhurst cadets were taken out after six months training. We cannot go further in cutting down the curriculum at Sandhurst, and that process has also been applied to Woolwich, where the normal course is two years, and where the next batch will come out after one year and three months, the next after one year. We let the cadets of Woolwich out with only half of the normal curriculum, and that is the way we give them consideration as against other classes of candidates. I think that the system of antedating commissions which was adopted during an earlier war would give very little satisfaction indeed. When, with the increase in the Army, we had the war, we had no other alternative—we were driven to it—but to find some other qualification, and we offered a certain number of commissions to the universities to be competed for by those who had passed Moderations or an equivalent examination. Having extended the age for the Militia, it was only fair that we should extend it for the universities, and as we felt that the university authorities would be better judges than ourselves, we placed at their disposal a certain number of commissions for university men between twenty and thirty. My right hon. friend thinks that a stigma is being put on these men by putting them under boys who have been eighteen months at Sandhurst. There will always be anomalies, but when they occur in a particular routine way they are not looked at. It is only when something new is done that they attract attention. To have had absolute justice all round, we should have had to consider the boys at Sandhurst, the young men in the Militia, and the youth at Oxford, and distribute them among the regiments, so that the older men would go to the regiments where promotion is rapid and the younger to the regiments where promotion is slow. Any such attempt is altogether beyond the capacity of the Military Secretary and his staff. I ask my right hon. friend to take my word for it that the Military Secretary has taken extreme care to see that no flagrant injustice is being done. The Military Secretary authorises me to say that the Militia officers in South Africa will not suffer. These officers have, of course, qualified

themselves over and over again, and undoubtedly, as vacancies occur, they will be given commissions in good regiments.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I suggested that these officers should be transferred to battalions in the field, especially the battalions to which their own regiments are affiliated, and I instanced the case taken from the public journals of junior officers brought from Militia regiments at home and given commissions in preference to them.

MR. WYNDHAM: Public journals would naturally see an apparent anomaly, but is it possible for the Military Secretary, when he has to fill up vacancies in a regiment, to go through the whole Army list and the whole Militia list? Surely these officers in South Africa have a better guarantee than that that their services will be remembered. They are the very men to whom commissions will be given in good regiments. That is being done every day, and we had better let Lord Roberts manage the Army in South Africa.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: That is the very thing I ask.

MR. WYNDHAM: It is being done every day, but when we have to fill up vacancies in a regiment in this country we cannot wait five or six weeks while we correspond with South Africa. It cannot be done. All I can say honestly and sincerely is that there is no jobbery, and that we are doing our best to make things as fair as we can for all concerned. I have said we have offered thirty commissions to the public schools, and I do not think that any aspirant to military honours will find that his career has been seriously impeded by gratifying the desire of these young gentlemen.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps I may be allowed to refer back to a question raised by my hon. friend as to the force Sir F. Carrington is to command. The hon. Gentleman rebuked my hon. friend for having made the in-

quiry, but my hon. friend did not ask, and would not think of asking, where a particular amount of Her Majesty's forces in South Africa was to be used, or for what purpose it was to be used. But it has been stated in the newspapers and elsewhere that Sir F. Carrington is going out on some special mission to Rhodesia, and I wish to know whether the force he is to command is to be provided and paid for altogether out of public funds, or is it to be some mysterious and novel kind of force employed under some other authority with the assistance of Sir F. Carrington? I do not think my hon. friend was deserving of the rebuke administered to him for having asked that. About these young lieutenants who are to be appointed, the word "jobbery" has been used more than once. I do not think that anyone expects that there will be jobbery, and I am sure that everything will be done in a perfectly straightforward way. I am perfectly certain from my knowledge of the military secretary that he will do anything in his power—and no one is more capable—to avoid even the semblance of injustice. But where such a large number of men are to be admitted suddenly to the Army it is almost impossible to avoid some degree of supersession. I am not very sure about the scheme of University cadets, especially if it is to go up to the age of thirty. What sort of man will you get at a university between twenty-five and thirty? He is a man who has been trying for years to get his degree and has not succeeded. You may as well go out into Pall Mall and ask any man under thirty to take a commission.

MR. WYNDHAM: He would have the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think that is a very broken reed to rest on. There is one class to which I should like to ask that mercy should be shown. Take the case of a young fellow who came within a few marks of qualifying for Sandhurst, or even who had qualified but failed in the competition. Is he not to have any chance? I think he has as good a claim as the public school boy or the mature graduate of thirty, who in his remote youth had been at one of the universities. The hon. Gentleman said

that the parents of all these young men had spent money on their education, but those who just missed getting into Sandhurst had money spent on them in order to join the Army, whereas the others had money spent on them to join the Church or the Bar, and I think the former is a class which ought to be drawn upon. I do not think there is much danger of supersession to such an extent as to cause a grievance, but I do think that a class who ought to be considered are those who have already exhibited a desire to go into the Army. I have not very much regard for the claims of the universities and public schools. When the hon. Gentleman speaks of universities, does he mean merely Oxford and Cambridge? Are there any Scotch universities?

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir. Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In those you are very likely to find better undergraduates. I hope the hon. Gentleman will pay some attention to the very deserving class to which I have specially referred, namely, the young men who have recently failed in Army examinations.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made and Question proposed,
"That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Third Resolution."

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): I appeal to the Leader of the House not to proceed with this Vote to-night. We have this year an increase of over £40,000,000 for our Army, and the Vote was passed through Committee without a single word being said, owing to circumstances to which I need not refer. It was understood that Report would be put down at a time which would enable us to discuss some of the details, but of course the House of Commons cannot at this late hour give its attention to them, and not only that but it is impossible that public attention should be drawn to these serious items owing to the

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

lateness of the hour. Another reason why I appeal to the Leader of the House is that two or three quite novel principles have been introduced in this Vote. There is, for instance, the pay of the South African local forces. That is quite an extraordinary item, amounting to three millions a year. The total pay of the Army only recently amounted to £5,000,000 a year, and here is a force of 25,000 men to whom it is proposed to pay £3,000,000. That appears a very extraordinary proportion. Moreover, it is quite a novel experiment, and I think it is open to very serious criticism. I am not criticising the enlistment of this force for the war. No doubt these men are very efficient, but I criticise the fact that they should receive three or four times as much as our own troops. That is surely open to very serious criticism, and is not a matter which ought to be discussed at an hour when public attention cannot be called to the discussion. I quite understand the Government paying three millions to tide the country over a temporary difficulty, but what one apprehends is that this force will be retained in South Africa for the next ten or fifteen years, owing to the conditions which will result from this unfortunate war; and that is what we are asked, at midnight, and in a half empty House, to commit ourselves to. I submit to the Leader of the House that we should not be called on under such circumstances to discuss such an important problem. There are two or three other new experiments of a very serious character involved in this Vote. I do not see why our own men who have fought so gallantly, who have borne the burden of all the contests, and have suffered more than the colonials, should only get 1s. 6d. a day, while the colonial gentlemen get 5s. It is an insult on our English, Scotch, Welsh, and Irish soldiers, and it is a matter which ought to be discussed at a time when the attention of the public can be drawn to it. I therefore move that the debate be now adjourned.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to second the motion, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will assent to it, because very great interest is taken in the question of the difference in the pay of certain Colonial troops and the ordinary regiments. I myself have received a great many communications on the subject, and I hope the right hon. Gen-

tleman will accede to the request of the hon. Gentleman.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—
(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR*, Manchester, E.) hoped the mover and seconder of the motion would not persist in it. It must be remembered that six days had already been spent on the Supplementary Estimates and three days on the ordinary Estimates of the year.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (*Waterford*) asked whether it was not right to say that it would have been impossible for him to raise upon this Vote the question of giving 5s. a day to the colonial troops.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR believed that was right. The question as directed immediately to pay could not be raised. Perhaps it would be in the recollection of the House that the Under Secretary for War was at considerable pains to point out to the House that a minute debate on this question would really not be in the public interest. It would not be in the public interest that the discussion should be carried on at any great length. It might raise a sense of injustice where no sense of injustice was at present felt. On the particular point which the two hon. Gentlemen had raised, he wished to make an appeal to them on the general question of the business of the House, and especially to the seconder of the motion. It was really necessary to get the Report of this Vote of Supply to-night or on Monday, in order to carry out the general programme of business which at considerable trouble and with great pains he had endeavoured to make to meet the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and especially hon. Gentlemen from Ireland. He had done his very best to meet that convenience, and it had been arranged that the Third Reading of the Appropriation Bill should be taken with the Consolidated Fund Bill on Thursday, so as to

give them full opportunity for discussing Irish financial relations, and that the Speaker should be moved out of the Chair on Monday in order to give them an opportunity of raising the question of higher education in Ireland. Unless the Government got this Report either to-night or Monday it would be absolutely impossible for them to keep to that programme, and the whole thing would be upset with great inconvenience to the House. Monday would not be more convenient. On Monday they must take the Second Reading of the Finance Bill, and that was not limited by the Twelve o'clock Rule. It was impossible for him to foresee how long the discussion on that would take. Under these circumstances it would be a great risk to leave this Vote over until Monday.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN asked why it was absolutely necessary that the debate on the Second Reading of the Finance Bill should be finished on Monday. They were so accustomed to have Tuesday taken for financial measures of one kind or another that they looked forward to Tuesday being taken for that purpose.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, if we do not finish on Monday night we should take it up on Tuesday, and that margin must be left us. If we succeed on Monday I shall take the Committee stage first on Tuesday.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said an arrangement might be made of this sort, that the debate if not ended on the Finance Bill might be interrupted at ten o'clock on Monday, and then the discussion taken on the Army Estimates. It was a substantial complaint that this huge Vote should be passed without any observation made on it at all. It was quite true that there was a general discussion, but there were a great many things that did not come into the category of the general discussion. His hon. friend the Member for Carnarvon had referred to one, but there were many others that Members wished to bring forward.

MR. JOHN REDMOND remarked that he saw the force of what the right hon. Gentleman had said with reference to the business next week, and, so far as he was concerned, he withdrew his opposition.

MR. BUCHANAN said the course suggested by the Leader of the Opposition was a feasible one. In that way there could be a fairly satisfactory debate on this very important Vote.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said it was but right to notice that those who spoke on the Finance Bill were probably not the Members present at this moment. There were many questions connected with the Finance Bill altogether apart from those connected with the war, and it would be a pity that any understanding should be made by Members present that would militate against other Members. It was not necessary to push the matter so far as an understanding or pledge on the part of the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman. It would be a pledge affecting gentlemen not present.

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Ordered, That the Resolution which, upon the 2nd day of this instant March, was reported from the Committee of Supply, and which was then agreed to by the House, be now read :

"That 114,800 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, including 18,805 Royal Marines."

That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during twelve months, for

the discipline and regulation of the Army; and that Mr. Wyndham, Mr. Goschen, and Mr. Powell-Williams do prepare and bring it in.

ARMY ANNUAL BILL.

"To provide, during Twelve Months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 135.]

SUPPLY [15TH MARCH] REPORT.

Resolution reported :—

ARMY (EXCESSES), 1898-9.

"That a sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to Her Majesty, to make good Excesses of Army Expenditure beyond the Grants, for the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1899."

Resolution agreed to.

CENSUS (EXPENSES).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any Expenses incurred for the purposes of the Census, under any Acts of the present Session for taking the Census in Great Britain and Ireland.—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve of the clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 19th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with—

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order.

Also the Certificate that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill—

Military Lands Provisional Order.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from : That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the following Bills ought to be dispensed with—

St. David's Railway (Abandonment).
Dublin Electric Lighting.

Read and agreed to.

LONDON HYDRAULIC POWER COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee : That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill.

BIRMINGHAM (KING EDWARD THE SIXTH) SCHOOLS BILL [H.L.].

Committed.

MUIRKIRK, MAUCHLINE, AND DALLMELLING TON RAILWAYS (ABANDONMENT) BILL [H.L.].

CORK ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Committed: The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

RHYMNEY IRON COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to order).

CLYDE NAVIGATION BILL [H.L.].

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House, That the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill:

VOL. LXXX. [FOURTH SERIES.]

Order of the Day for the second reading; discharged: Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

MENSTONE WATER (TRANSFER) BILL [H.L.].

Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

PONTEFRAC T PARK BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

CLONTARF URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Message from the Commons, That they have come to the following resolution, to which they desire the concurrence of this House, viz., that it is expedient that the said Bills should be committed to a Joint Committee of both Houses; the said message to be taken into consideration on Thursday next.

BURNLEY CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

NEWTOWN AND LLANLLWCHAIARN URBAN DISTRICT GAS BILL [H.L.].

KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES GAS BILL [H.L.].

BEXHILL AND ROTHERFIELD RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

DORKING WATER BILL [H.L.].

MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.—

E. Portsmouth,
E. Romney,
L. Clifford of Chudleigh (*Chairman*),
L. Hatherton,
L. Seaton;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MISCELLANEOUS, No. 2 (1900).

Reports from Her Majesty's Representatives abroad on the provision made in foreign countries for the university education of Roman Catholics. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

WAR LOAN BILL.

Read 2^a (according to Order); Committee negatived. Then Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to Order), and dispensed with. Bill read 3^a, and passed.

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM BILL
[H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order). Bill reported without amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be Read 3^a To-morrow.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five of the clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 19th March, 1900.

*PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.*PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER
62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—

Great Western Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER
63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.:—

London United Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING
ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY IN-
QUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—

Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords].

Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

CHRISTCHURCH, BOURNEMOUTH,
AND WINTON TRAMWAYS BILL.

To be read a second time to-morrow.

METROPOLITAN WATER COMPANIES
BILL.

To be read a second time upon Thursday next.

RICKMANSWORTH AND UXBRIDGE
VALLEY WATER BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): I do not intend to proceed with the motion for the rejection of this Bill which stands on the Paper in my name. The object of some of the clauses of the Bill was to take a very large quantity of water from the Thames, and allow it to be passed into the mains of one of the London Water Companies without the consent either of this House, or of the Conservators of the River Thames. The company promoting the Bill were informed that Parliament was not at all likely to consent to such a measure, and they have agreed to withdraw all the contentious clauses from the Bill, and also to repeal all the clauses in their old Act which gave them power to sell water in bulk, either inside or outside their constituency. Under these circumstances I hope the House will be satisfied, and will give the Bill a Second Reading.

MR. HUDSON (Hertfordshire, Hitchin): I also had a motion down, but I have been before the Chairman of Ways

and Means to-day, and the promoters having made concessions I shall not press my opposition.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

**SHANNON WATER AND ELECTRIC
POWER BILL (BY ORDER).**

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. AUSTIN (Limerick): I understand that the promoters have agreed to the insertion in the Bill of clauses protecting the rights of Limerick and other places, and therefore I withdraw my motion in opposition.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

**DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.
CLONTARF URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
BILL (BY ORDER).**

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith): I have put on the Paper a motion dealing with the method of procedure in regard to the Dublin Corporation Bill, and perhaps as it is somewhat unusual though not unprecedented, I ought to make a short statement with regard to it. The importance of this Bill is such that it has induced the Chairman of the House of Lords Committee and myself to consent to the Bill being referred to a Joint Committee of the two Houses. First of all I think the importance of this Bill will be acknowledged, and by nobody more so than by the opponents of the Bill who during the last session of Parliament gave very strenuous opposition to the Bill. Now the Bill affects very many interests, and I do not think it will be contended that it is anything but a Bill of great importance. Secondly it is extremely desirable to avoid, if possible, any conflict between the two Houses in regard to this measure. Unfortunately, last year a conflict was generated in the expiring days of the session in regard to it which led to the Bill being dropped. The Bill passed this House on consideration by a majority of 162, and it passed its Third Reading unanimously, and yet unfortunately in the other House the extension proposals of the Bill were thrown out in Committee. I think it is

extremely desirable if we can to prevent a recurrence of this unfortunate circumstance, and I believe if the House were to adopt the proposal which the Lords Chairman and I now make, any chances of difference of opinion would be obviated. Then it is important that we should obtain as strong a committee as we possibly can to consider this matter. Without casting the slightest reflection upon the Gentlemen who devoted considerable time last year to the consideration of this Bill, I think that the House will possibly be better satisfied with the results of an inquiry by a somewhat stronger Committee, and the best way in my opinion to obtain the services of a stronger Committee would be the appointment of a Joint Committee. We therefore suggest a Joint Committee, and I think we should be better able to obtain the services of some of the strongest Members of this House if it is known that they are to join with some of the best Members of the other House in considering a Bill of this magnitude and character. Then there is the question of expense. Last year the Bill was for seventeen days before a Committee of this House, and fourteen days in the other House. I have had no estimate whatever of what the costs have been to the respective parties, but I feel sure they must have gone into several thousands of pounds, and probably if I said tens of thousands of pounds I should not be very far off the mark. If we are to maintain a system of legislation by private Bills, we cannot continue it if we go on imposing such vast penalties upon those who come to this tribunal for a solution of their difficulties, and by the appointment of a Joint Committee we should at least halve the expense, and probably even bring it below this sum. These are the reasons which have induced Lord Morley and myself to agree to the course which I propose. The reasons which may be urged before the House against this proposal are that it is an unprecedented one. I am prepared to admit that so far as sending Bills for the extension of boundaries to a Joint Committee is concerned it is unprecedented; but with regard to sending private Bills to a Joint Committee it is not unprecedented. In 1873 several important Bills were sent to a Joint Committee in the way I propose, and notably when the London and North Western and the Lancashire and Yorkshire

proposed to amalgamate their systems, and when the Midland Railway and Glasgow and South Western proposed the amalgamation of their systems, these Bills were similarly treated. Those Bills were no doubt of great importance to the travelling public, and also to the shareholders of these railways. But I venture to say that the Bill which I propose to deal with in the same way is a Bill of not less importance to the ratepayers and inhabitants of the city of Dublin, and not less important to the ratepayers and inhabitants of the surrounding suburbs of Dublin, and indeed I may say it is of great importance to all the inhabitants of Ireland, because it deals with the extension of the metropolis of that country, and in that respect no doubt all the inhabitants of Ireland would be interested in the fate of the Bill. Therefore, so far as the importance of the Bill goes, I should be quite prepared to argue that this Bill is quite as important as those which the House dealt with in a similar way in the year 1873. In addition I would point out that Provisional Orders have been dealt with in this way. The Rates and Charges Provisional Orders Bill of 1892 was in this manner sent to a Joint Committee. Then the House will recollect that in the Private Bill (Scotland) Procedure Bill a clause was inserted by which it was provided that confirmation Bills—Bills confirming Provisional Orders which were opposed—should in future be sent to a Joint Committee of the two Houses. Therefore Parliament last session expressed its approval of the principle of Joint Committees, and I think we should not be going against the spirit and intention of Parliament if we were to treat this Bill in a similar manner. These are the reasons which have induced me to submit this course for the approval of the House. I propose to ask the House to deal with the Clontarf Bill in a similar manner because it is practically an identical Bill. It deals with the same subject matter. As to the procedure, if this motion is carried it will be communicated to the other House, and the other House will return it to this House with their assent, and then it will fall upon this House to nominate members of the Committee. As to the number to be elected, I should be inclined to limit it as far as possible, following the precedent of 1873, and appoint three

Members from this House and three from the other House, but if there is a strong feeling to increase it I shall be prepared to add one to the number. I should also be anxious that the Members should be selected by the Committee of selection, because I feel certain, especially after what was said last Friday, the House would have greater confidence in the selection thus made, than if the selection were made in the ordinary way by the whips from either side of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient that the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons; that a message be sent to the Lords to communicate this resolution, and to desire their concurrence."—(*Mr. J. W. Lowther.*)

*MR. J. W. MELLOR (Yorkshire, W.R. Sowerby): I am glad the Chairman has made this motion. I hope the time will come when every private Bill, or certainly every important private Bill, will be sent to a Joint Committee of the two Houses. I do not think it is necessary to labour the question as to whether there is a precedent or not for this motion, because the legislation of the last session is in my opinion conclusive as to the opinion of this House; a most valuable principle was laid down when it was decided to send Scotch private Bills to a Joint Committee of the two Houses. There is a great deal to be said on the question of expense. I think that the expenditure on private Bills is rapidly becoming a public scandal, and that the time has come when the House ought to take the matter into its own hands and see whether some system cannot be devised under which the great expenditure on private Bill legislation can be reduced. It is true that in five cases out of six Bills may be and are promoted by great companies, private and otherwise, but it is frequently the case that much expense falls upon the opponents who cannot help themselves. I cannot help thinking that the referring of private Bills to a joint Committee will be the first step to bring about an important reform which will enable persons to come before Parliament without being put to an expenditure which may ruin them. Such a reform will be highly appreciated in the country.

Mr. J. W. Lowther.

MR. CARSON (Dublin University) : I should not dissent from this motion if it were a proposal of a general character, but I must say that I at all events desire to enter my protest against this system being first introduced I think for definite purposes in relation to this Irish Bill. I know very well that the motion is made to try to push this Bill through. I know very well what the Government did last year. The Government did their level best to get this Bill through, and they went to very great lengths to try to coerce the other House of Parliament; and I am perfectly well aware that this motion is made not for the purpose of creating a general system of referring private Bills to Joint Committees, but in order if possible in some way or other that this Bill which had the support of the Government last session may be passed through. But why is an exceptional course taken in this case? The very same thing has happened in England as regards Boundary Bills—that the Houses have disagreed, but it has never been suggested that any such system as that now proposed by the Chairman of Ways and Means should be adopted. The first matter which he puts forward as an argument for taking this exceptional course is the importance of the Bill. I do not know that the Dublin Boundaries Bill has a greater principle at stake than other private Bills which have come before the House, but assuming that it is an important Bill, and I admit that it is, I should have thought that would have been one of the reasons why the settled practice and procedure of this House should not be departed from, and that the Bill in the ordinary way should go before a Committee of each House who should separately decide upon it according to their own independent view. Then it is said that we had last year a conflict between the two Houses upon this private Bill. There again I fail to see that that is any reason why this Joint Committee should be set up. The truth of the matter is, Parliament has laid down an ordinary procedure for these Committees; they have both to agree to the proposals made in a private Bill, and I fail to see how private rights will be infringed by the Bill coming before the Committees of the two Houses. That being so, I do not see how any constitu-

tional conflict can arise, especially in a Bill of this character, that has not been raised in a Bill applying to England. The truth of the matter is, as I said before, this motion has an indirect object. It is an attempt to pass this Bill, if possible, at any cost, and I must say that I look with the gravest suspicion upon this matter, originating not in the case of an English Bill, but in the case of an Irish Bill, which led last year to a great deal of conflict, and which, although the Unionist Members for Ireland were against it, was largely supported by Her Majesty's Government. What on earth one Bill has to do with the other I entirely fail to see. The motion anticipates that, by this manoeuvre of getting the Joint Committee, the Dublin Corporation Boundaries Bill will be passed, and therefore it will be unnecessary to pass the Clontarf Bill as a separate measure. As matters stand at present, the Chairman of Committees is absolutely in error when he states that the Clontarf Bill deals with the same subject matter. Clontarf is quite satisfied to stay as it is, whereas the Dublin Bill desires to swallow it up. So far as I am concerned in relation to this Bill, I protested against it last year, and I intend to protest against it this year. I am aware that Irish Unionists never got and never expect any support from Her Majesty's Government, but I think the least Her Majesty's Government might have done was to have let Parliamentary procedure take its ordinary course. I think for a Unionist Government, through their Chairman of Committees, to force this Bill on us and to make an exceptional motion in this case goes a little too far. I know in this matter I have have not the power which hon. Members opposite have. It rejoices me, as they come from my own country, that they are so powerful, and, though I differ from them, I think it is greatly to their credit. When I attempt to divide the House on these Irish questions I know I am in a futile minority. I admit it—no one more readily. Therefore I shall not divide the House upon this motion, but I desire at this stage to enter my protest against anything whatsoever being done in relation to this matter, and I firmly believe and state openly that I believe it is not done with a view to any better procedure but to attempt to force the Bill through the House.

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I am very happy to hear from the right hon. and learned Gentleman that he is not going to divide the House on this most reasonable motion. I merely rise to speak as a citizen of many years standing living in the City of Dublin, and as a ratepayer whose rates are not by any means inconsiderable. I confess in the interests of the City of Dublin generally and in the interests of Ireland at large, I am most anxious to see the Bill become law. I concur in every word that has been so ably and so authoritatively put forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means. The expense accompanying this attempt on the part of the corporation to carry a measure which would redound enormously to the advantage of Dublin, and, with Dublin, of the whole country, last year, was attended with almost disastrous consequences. I saw it stated in an Irish newspaper a few days ago that the expenses incurred by the corporation exceeded £16,000 or £17,000, which all must ultimately come upon the ratepayers. If this is a good measure, it is hard to conceive any tribunal better fitted to deal with it than a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament. It is a pity that these private Bills do not go before Joint Committees in every case, because the idea of going over the same story first before a Committee of the House of Commons and then before a Committee of the House of Lords by the same counsel and resting on the same evidence, appears to me to be an old-fashioned anomaly. Some years ago, when there was a Commission appointed to inquire into Private Bill legislation procedure, there were very strong arguments put forward, and I believe there was a majority of the Commissioners in favour of substituting a Joint Committee. The idea of this Bill taking seventeen days in the House of Commons and afterwards fourteen days in the House of Lords, with the same evidence and the same procedure, when the whole thing might be halved and the expense might be halved, and a better result arrived at, presents a picture which I think should satisfy every impartial man that this motion ought to be acceded to. The City of Dublin is in the anomalous position of being hemmed in by four or five independent townships and munici-

palities. No matter how its population increases, no matter what the demand there may be for houses for the poor and dwellings for the lower classes, all their efforts are thwarted and rendered impossible by the present geographical and municipal position of the town.

*MR SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Member is not in order in going into the merits of the Bill.

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL: I will not occupy any further time. The reasons have been put forward *seriatim* by the right hon. Gentleman, and I trust the House will agree now to carry this motion.

Question then put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is expedient that the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to communicate this Resolution, and to desire their concurrence.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

MORECAMBE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (GAS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Waterloo-with-Seaforth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899.

Petitions for alteration of Law, from Poplar; and Fulham; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF WOODLANDS.

Petition from Cardigan, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions, in favour, from Chester (two); Trawden; Burley in Wharfedale;

Chadderton; Maidstone; and Oswald-twistle; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Patricroft, in favour, and against corporal punishment for youthful offenders; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Portsmouth; Cotgrave; Englefield Green; Ipswich; Stockton on Tees; Holbrook; Sunderland (six); and Mid Kent; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Huntingdon; Philadelphia (two); Norwich; London (five); Greenwich; Chester (two); Ponty-mister; Hayle; King's Lynn (two); West Lynn; Leeds; Hackney; St. Pancras; Sheffield; Cricklewood; Selby; Willesden Green; Harrow Road; Hackney; Highbury; Ipswich; Staines; Enfield; Victoria Park; Holloway; Crouch End; King's Cross; Berwick-on-Tweed; Mid Kent; and Woodbridge; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (VICTUALLING YARD MANUFACTURING ACCOUNTS, 1898-9).

Annual Accounts presented, of the Cost of Manufacturing, Provisions, Victualling Stores, &c., at the Home Victualling Yards and Malta Yard for 1898-9, &c., with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 101.]

ARMY (CLOTHING FACTORY).

Annual Account presented, of the Royal Army Clothing Factory for the year 1898-9, with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 102.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2389 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION OF ROMAN CATHOLICS ABROAD (MISCELLANEOUS, No. 2, 1900).

Copy presented, of Reports from Her Majesty's Representatives Abroad on the provision made in Foreign Countries for the University Education of Roman Catholics [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—CONTRABAND OF WAR—RIGHT OF SEARCH—THE "HERZOG."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the "Herzog," which was detained on the high seas by Her Majesty's Ship "Thetis," on suspicion of carrying contraband of war, and was brought into Durban on 6th January, 1900, then came under the authority of the Prize Court; whether Her Majesty's Government telegraphed on 7th January to Sir F. Lascelles at Berlin that the Prize Court would adjudicate on the "Herzog"; whether the Prize Court exercised its authority by ordering the release of the Portuguese Governor of Zambesi and of eight Portuguese officers found on board the "Herzog"; whether the Commander-in-Chief, Cape of Good Hope Station, reported to the Admiralty on 6th January that the Senior Naval Officer at Durban had telegraphed that the "Herzog" had on board large quantities of provisions consigned to enemy's agents, which there was reasonable ground for suspecting were intended for the enemy; why did the Admiralty, on 7th January, 1900, telegraph to Rear Admiral Harris a peremptory order to direct the immediate release of the "Herzog," and thus prevent inquiry into and adjudication upon the character and destination of the cargo; on what ground did the Admiralty thus direct the "Herzog" to be taken from out of the authority of the Prize Court, and thus render impossible any complete examination of the cargo and the papers that might have been ordered by that

court, and any adjudication upon the whole case by the court; and does the Admiralty assume to exercise such authority over Prize Courts in general as is involved in the removal from their authority of vessels lawfully and properly detained and brought in for adjudication by such courts; and, if not, to what extent does the Admiralty claim a right of interference with such courts.

***THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this for him. The group of questions put by the hon. Member are for the most part based on a very natural misconception of the facts of the case. He is justified in assuming from the published correspondence that the "Herzog" had been placed in the Prize Court. This was implied by the telegram of 6th January from the senior naval officer at Durban, and appears to have been accepted generally at the time; as a matter of fact it transpired subsequently that the "Herzog" had never been handed over to the Prize Court, and therefore the senior naval officer was clearly under a misapprehension at the date of his telegram. There is thus no question of the Admiralty assuming to exercise authority over Prize Courts. The answer to question four is in the affirmative. With reference to question five, in consequence of the German mail steamer "Bundesrath" being at the time in arrest under a similar suspicion, the Commander-in-Chief was directed on the 1st January not to arrest the "Herzog" nor any other German mail steamer until it became obvious that the "Bundesrath" was carrying contraband. Before the instructions could reach the cruisers off Delagoa Bay, the "Herzog" had been seized and taken to Durban as reported in Commander-in-Chief's telegram of 6th January. On receipt of this telegram on the following day, January 7th, Sunday, the Commander-in-Chief was directed to order the immediate release of the "Herzog." This was simply a confirmation of the general order given on the 1st January, and was rendered the more necessary because nothing contraband up to that time had been found on board the "Bundesrath." I may add that the senior naval officer's telegram of the 6th January, which laid stress upon probable hostile destination of cargo, had not then been received.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that no search whatever had been made of the cargo?

***MR. BRODRICK**: I believe that it is the case that only a very cursory search was made, but the Admiralty had an undertaking given in Berlin that the vessel was not carrying any contraband, and that one of the company's ships, which on the outbreak of war had on board what might be considered contraband of war, had discharged at Port Said.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is it not the fact that three days after release had been ordered by the Admiralty—

***MR. SPEAKER**: Order, order! The hon. Member is now going too far. He is carrying on a debate. The question has been answered.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: But, Sir, I received an answer to the second paragraph, which is misleading.

***MR. SPEAKER**: Order, order!

THE WAR LOAN.

SIR J. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state the number and total amount of the subscriptions for the war loan; what sums have been offered from Abroad and from the United Kingdom respectively; what applications were between £100 and £1,000, between £1,000 and £100,000, and between £100,000 and £1,000,000; and what was the amount of the maximum application; and on what system, if any, the allotments will be issued, discriminating between small and large applications.

***THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER** (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I will give the hon. Member the best answer I can to this question; but, of course, the House will see that there may have been more than one application from one applicant in certain cases, and, on the other hand, that there may have been several applicants included in one application—from a broker, for example. The number of applications was about 39,800. The total amount applied for was £335,500,000. It is impossible to say how much of this total was applied for from abroad. The number of applications from £100 to

£1,000, both inclusive, was 30,800; the number of applications from £1,100 to £100,000, both inclusive, was 8,630; the number of applications from £100,100 to £1,000,000, both inclusive, was 344. The largest application was £10,000,000. The system of allotment will be that large applicants (*i.e.*, for £10,000 and upwards) will receive 6 per cent.; applicants for sums below that amount will receive allotments varying from 6 per cent. to an allotment in full for as many of the smallest as can be arranged.

SIR J. LENG: When will the allotment be made?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: As soon as possible, but I cannot say definitely.

THE "BUNDESRATH."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, on 3rd January, 1900, he telegraphed to the Governor of Natal as to the "Bundesrath," detained on suspicion of carrying contraband of war, then presumably in custody of the Prize Court, that the capturing officer of Her Majesty's ship "Magicienne" should apply to the court to release at once the mails on board the captured ship; was this instruction to the naval officer in question sent at the request and with the concurrence of the Admiralty; and if not, by virtue of what authority was it sent.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I telegraphed to the Governor of Natal on January 3rd, in the sense mentioned by my hon. friend, and an application having accordingly been made to the court, the mails were released. The telegraphic instruction was sent with the concurrence of the First Lord of the Admiralty.

THE "MASHONA."

MR. MENDL (Plymouth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the British steamship "Mashona" which, while on a passage from New York to South African ports last December, was seized by one of Her Majesty's warships and taken from Algoa Bay to Capetown as a prize, has been released by a judgment of the Court at Capetown; whether Her Majesty's Government has, through the United

States Ambassador, undertaken to meet any claims for loss or damage sustained by American subjects interested in the cargo in consequence of the delay in delivery of their goods; and whether claims of British subjects similarly interested will be dealt with on the same footing.

*MR. BRODRICK: The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. Her Majesty's Government have not admitted liability in respect of any claims of the nature indicated, but they have offered to purchase the flour on board owned by United States citizens. Claims for redress for the non-delivery of the cargo appear to be matter for settlement between such claimants and the ship which undertook to deliver. British subjects who owned goods on board, having no right to trade with the enemy, are not in the same position as foreign owners. The latter are not guilty of any offence in trading with the enemy from a neutral country unless the goods are contraband and are found on board of a ship in British territorial waters or on the high seas, and are destined for the enemy countries.

ARMY COMMISSIONS FOR CAMBRIDGE STUDENTS.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R. Elland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a circular issued by the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge inviting candidates for commissions in the Army to come forward from among the students, in which the following words occur: "The Vice-Chancellor will require to be satisfied that the means of candidates are sufficient to enable them to hold a commission in the branch of the service for which they apply"; whether this notice was issued with the knowledge and approval of the War Office; and whether he is aware that owing to this notice and requirement, a considerable number of men otherwise anxious to give their services to the country at this crisis, have been deterred from applying for commissions.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. WYNDHAM, Dover): The War Office was not consulted in regard to this notice, which seems to have been perfectly within the competence of the Vice-Chancellor. The applications

made to the Vice-Chancellor have been so numerous as to suggest that it had no deterrent effect.

ARMY VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, if he could explain why the vacancy which occurred in November last in the rank of Veterinary Lieutenant Colonel has not been filled up; and whether it is usual to keep open appointments in the higher ranks of the Army Veterinary Department for so long a period.

*MR. WYNDHAM: There is no officer at present qualified under the regulations.

VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY TRAINING.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether a Volunteer 16-pounder battery coming up with one-half its men for training for a fortnight will receive pay and allowances although one-half of the whole garrison brigade to which it belongs does not do so; and whether Volunteer batteries coming up for training will be given horses or sufficient allowance to enable them to provide horses for themselves.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The whole scheme of training Volunteer batteries is still under consideration. All those who come up for the special training will be provided with the means of hiring horses.

VOLUNTEERS IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

CAPTAIN JESSEL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the invitation given by the Government to the auxiliary forces and to the employers of labour, they would themselves show an example by giving special facilities to Volunteers serving in Government Departments to attend the proposed camps in the ensuing summer.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Special facilities will be offered to Volunteers this summer to attend camps.

ENNISKILLEN BARRACKS.

MR. ARCHDALE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it would be possible for

the War Office to reconsider their decision to remove headquarters from Enniskillen, taking into account the military feeling pervading the country, and also the conduct of the Inniskilling Fusiliers at the front, 90 per cent. of whose men are recruited in the district; also taking into account the increased accommodation pointed out to the War Office, and the unanimous resolutions of the Fermanagh Grand Jury and Enniskillen Town Commissioners on the subject.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The decision to remove the headquarters from Enniskillen has been made after a very careful consideration of all circumstances and must be maintained.

WEST INDIAN AGRICULTURAL CONFERENCES.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the proceedings of the West Indian Agricultural Conferences will in due course be printed and issued as a Parliamentary Paper.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Imperial Commissioner of Agriculture for the West Indies issues a journal entitled "The West Indian Bulletin," containing reports of these conferences. In view of the fact that a report by the Commissioner dealing generally with the work of his department in the West Indies is intended to be presented to Parliament annually, I do not propose to issue these reports as a Parliamentary Paper.

CHINA—BRITISH TRADE ON INLAND RIVERS.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he is aware that British owned steamers specially built to trade under the agreement with the Chinese Government, which authorised British ships to carry British goods to every riverside town and station, are being taken off the West River in consequence of not being allowed to load or discharge cargo at places between treaty ports; and whether Her Majesty's Government will insist on the carrying out of the agreement as to navigation on inland waterways in its entirety.

*MR. BRODRICK: We have not heard of any British steamers having

been taken off the West River in the circumstances referred to. The agreement with the Chinese Government permitted foreigners to trade in steamers where native boats had been permitted. This did not include every riverside town and station. The hon. Member will find further information on this subject in the papers which are shortly to be presented.

PIRACY ON THE WEST RIVER.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether pirates have attacked with firearms the steam cutter of Her Majesty's ship "Tweed" on the West River, and whether the "Tweed," only steaming two knots against the current, is suitable for the work in which she is engaged; and, if not, whether this gunboat will be replaced by one better adapted to carry out an effective patrol; and whether the commanders of Her Majesty's gunboats stationed on the West River have now been authorised to take whatever steps may be necessary to repress piracy in that district.

*MR. BRODRICK: On the 6th January the steam cutter of Her Majesty's ship "Tweed" chased a Chinese launch, which had been seized by pirates, up one of the creeks of the West River, and after an exchange of shots succeeded in rescuing the launch. Two British vessels of higher speed than the "Tweed," one being a torpedo boat, are engaged in the West River. The Commander-in-Chief on the China station is taking steps for the repression of piracy, and in co-operation with the new Viceroy, Li-Hung-Chang.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that British owned cargo steamers will be placed on the Upper Yangtze next month, and whether the gunboats sent to patrol that portion of the river are unsuitable for the purpose both as regards steaming power and construction, and, if so, whether he will state to the House what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take in fulfilment of their pledge to provide for the protection of British trade.

*MR. BRODRICK: We have heard that one British steamer will be placed on the

Upper Yangtze in April or May next. It is not the fact that the gunboats placed on the river have been found unsuitable. An attempt is to be made next month by two of them to make the passage of the rapids between Ichang and Chungking, and the experience then gained will doubtless prove of much value in deciding on the best class of vessels for the navigation of the river.

CHINA - PROTECTION OF BRITISH INTERESTS.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he will state whether, in consequence of representations from the American Minister at Pekin, the United States Government have decided to send a war ship from Manilla to the nearest port in China, and whether representations have also been addressed to the British Minister at Pekin, pointing out that rebellion and anarchy are apprehended in China in consequence of the attitude of the Dowager Empress to the further extension of the policy of the "open door"; and whether the Government have taken the necessary steps to protect British interests in China, in view of such an outbreak taking place.

*MR. BRODRICK: The answer to the first question is in the negative. Her Majesty's Government have taken and will continue to take all necessary steps to protect British interests in China.

WEI-HAI-WEI-NAVAL EXPENDITURE.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty what has been the naval expenditure on the naval depot at Wei-hai-Wei up to the present time, as compared with the Estimates laid before Parliament, and excluding expenditure from Army Votes on engineer and garrison services.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The expenditure on the naval depot at Wei-hai-Wei for the year 1898-99, in round figures, was £25,500, of which rather more than £7,000 was spent on dredging, £15,000 on the purchase of land, and the balance on a rifle range, repairs, and various small miscellaneous services. As regards the

present year, I am unable to add anything to the information which I gave in the debate on the Naval Estimates on March 2nd last.

THE PUNJAB—LAW OF SUCCESSION—PRIMOGENITURE.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can now state whether many important petitions have been presented to the Punjab authorities from loyal Sirdars of the Cis Sutlej territory of the Punjab, praying for relief from uncertainty and for recognition by Government of the rule of primogeniture in the succession to their respective estates, and whether there has been any delay or want of uniformity on the part of local officials in reporting on and dealing with such petitions; and whether he can now grant a Return giving copies of the petitions and correspondence in respect of which, on the 11th May last, he was pleased to state that he would make a reference to the Government of India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I made a reference to the Government of India on the subject referred to in my hon. friend's question, and learn from them that no petitions of the nature referred to in it have reached the Punjab Government. The correspondence on the subject does not appear to be of such public importance as to be suitable for being laid before the House, and is, moreover, incomplete. I shall, however, be glad to communicate it to my hon. friend if he desires to see it.

BUDGET PROPOSALS—STAMPS ON BROKERS' BILLS.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he proposes to make any change in that part of the Finance Bill which referred to the stamps on brokers' bills.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: As my hon. friend is aware, I have received several deputations on this subject, and they undoubtedly have brought before me matters with which I was not previously acquainted. I do not think it would be right, in view of the considerations which have been laid before me, to press the clause in its present form. I shall further

consider the matter before Committee in order that I may, if necessary, place another clause on the Paper, and that, of course, would require a preliminary Resolution. The clause as it stands will not be proceeded with.

SOLDIERS' ESTATES AND THE DEATH DUTIES.

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his statement that the practice in the past had been to exclude from the exemption of estate duty, conferred under Section 8 (1), Finance Act, 1894, the property of non-commissioned officers above the rank of corporal, if he will state whether such exclusion is specified by any distinct law or legal enactment, or has become a practice in consequence of the decision of the Treasury; and whether it is within the power of the Executive to extend the act of clemency, which they had exercised in the case of the property of the Emperor of Russia, to the property of non-commissioned officers who have died in Her Majesty's service during the present war.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No record exists of the origin of the practice, but it has been prevailed since the beginning of the century. Section 8 (1) of the Finance Act, 1894, gave by its terms the force of law to this practice in respect of estate duty. I do not think that the Executive could properly take the course suggested in the second paragraph of the question. There are grave objections to initiating remissions of taxation in a fresh class of cases without the distinct authority of Parliament.

CIVIL SERVICE—PROMOTION RULES.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, under Rule II. of Treasury Circular, No. 17341, issued in December last, a staff officer in the Civil Service in receipt of a salary of £400 per annum, who has become a staff officer by promotion from the Second Division, would, on promotion to a clerkship in the First Division, carrying a scale of £200 to £500 per annum, either (1) be put on the minimum of the scale of his new post, namely, £200, or, if he preferred, (2) on the salary which he would have reached if he had remained in the Second Division, which salary might

be considerably less, but could not be greater than £350 per annum; whether the Order of Her Majesty in Council, dated 15th August, 1890, which applies to all permanent officers in the Civil Service on scales of salary in excess of the Second Division, and therefore includes within its scope the staff officer in question, provides that no person promoted to a higher post shall in any case suffer immediate pecuniary loss by such promotion; and whether, in the circumstances, the Rule referred to is competent; and, if so, from what statutory or other authority the power of the Treasury to make a Rule superseding provision in an Order of Her Majesty in Council is derived.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The statements in the first paragraph are correct. Appointments to staff posts are the prizes of the Second Division, and are not intended to form stepping stones to the First Division. The salaries of such posts are therefore fixed on an exceptionally liberal scale. It would be obviously improper to allow the holder of such a post to be advanced to the First Division with a commencing salary higher than that of his colleague of equal service who had entered the Division after an open competition of a much higher class. Clause 4 of the Order in Council of 15th August, 1890, to which the hon. Member refers, increases the official attendance throughout the service from six to seven hours, and provides that any person then serving, who might thereafter be promoted, should give seven hours attendance without addition to the rate of salary attached to the office. As, however, such person might at the date of the promotion be in actual receipt of a personal allowance for a seven hours attendance, the proviso was introduced to ensure him against actual loss by the cessation of his allowance, if the salary of his new post was less than his previous salary and allowance combined. Beyond this the proviso has no general application. The Rule II. of the Treasury Circular of December last does not therefore conflict with the provisions of any Order in Council.

POST OFFICE—SICK LEAVE REGULATIONS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the Secretary to

the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it is the practice to count the absence of Post Office officials, when due to an outbreak of infectious disease in their homes, as sick leave; whether this course will have a prejudicial effect upon the official career of an officer in the way of retarding promotion or causing superannuation owing to such absences; and whether, in view of the importance of preventing the spread of infectious diseases, and the tendency of the new regulations to deter an officer from informing the Department of an outbreak, the Postmaster General will consider the advisability of withdrawing the new regulation.

MR. HANBURY: Compulsory absence owing to the presence of infectious disease at home carries full pay for a limited period, as sick leave does. Such absence does not affect an officer's prospects of promotion or his superannuation. These regulations are so favourable as to offer no inducement to officers to mislead the Department. Should the absence exceed six months the Treasury would be prepared to consider an application for a reasonable lodging allowance.

AUTOMATIC RAILWAY COUPLINGS.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the automatic railway couplings of an inventor, whose models were in the House of Commons last session, have been worked on railway wagons with success, substituting automatic coupling for manual coupling on the spot; and whether any arrangement can be made to enable Members of this House to inspect them on railway wagons during this session, so that they may see for themselves how automatic coupling can be adopted on railways throughout the United Kingdom without interference with trade or the necessary operations of any railway company, and give complete safety to railway servants.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: If any arrangement such as is suggested in the question is made, will care be taken not to give preferential treatment to any one inventor, and to give Members of the House an opportunity of seeing all the best inventions?

MR. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): May I ask whether the Royal Commissioners were not aware of the invention referred to, and reported that no invention had been submitted which they could recommend?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am afraid I could not make any arrangement such as that suggested until Parliament has considered the legislative proposals which the Government are putting before them. If Parliament approves of these proposals I have no doubt it can be arranged that hon. Members shall see the various inventions. Of course the railway companies could of their own free will give the facilities which the hon. Member suggests in the case of one inventor, but they would have to consider the claims of other inventors. With regard to the other question, I have no doubt that the Royal Commission had this particular question before them, and they did make a report, as has been suggested. I do not think the Royal Commission wished it to be inferred that they had exhaustively considered any of the inventions put forward.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that automatic couplings are in general use in America and other countries?

MR. RITCHIE: Oh, yes, I am thoroughly well aware of that fact.

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM—BUCKLAND COLLECTION.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any decision has been arrived at to remove the Buckland Collection from the South Kensington Museum, having in view the desirability of utilising it for giving national instruction in fisheries and pisciculture.

MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir.

SIR MARK STEWART: Is there any intention to remove it?

MR. RITCHIE: That is rather a matter for the Lord President of the Council.

FRIERN BARNET WATER SUPPLY.

MAJOR BOWLES (Middlesex, Enfield): I beg to ask the President of the Local

Government Board when an answer will be sent to the district council of Friern Barnet as to the result of the inquiry as to the supply of water to the district.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The Friern Barnet Urban District Council have applied to the Local Government Board to give notice to the Barnet Valley Water Company to discontinue their neglect in providing a constant supply of water to a portion of the district. The company contend that they are not in default, on the ground that one fifth of the houses in the portion of the district in question are not furnished with the prescribed fittings. The Board are now awaiting a reply to a communication which they addressed to the company on the 24th February last, and on receiving the reply they will communicate further with the District Council on the matter.

EPILEPTIC CHILDREN—CERTIFICATED SCHOOLS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, whether he is aware that inconvenience is arising from the delay in publishing a list of schools certified under the Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, 1899, and that children are in some instances being kept in unsuitable homes in receipt of outdoor relief from the guardians, as the district councils cannot obtain the names of schools to which they can be sent; and whether, under the circumstances, the schools at Chalfont St. Peter could be provisionally certified.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): No schools can be certified under the Act until the Minute laid upon the Table on February 28th has become valid on March 28th.

MATHRY BURIAL GROUND.

MR. PHILIPPS (Pembrokeshire): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Hallam Division of Sheffield, as representing the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, whether the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in the year 1882 made over a portion of ground to the Mathry Parish Council, to be used by

them as a burial ground; and whether the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have since then vested this same piece of land in the incumbent of Mathry, although the Parish Council had spent £60 in enclosing it; if so, will he state whether he proposes any action in this matter.

*Mr. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): In the year 1881 the Ecclesiastical Commissioners on the application of the vicar offered to sell for £50 to the parish certain land as a site for an additional burial ground. The parish authorities, however, did not pay over to the Commissioners the consideration money, or take any steps to complete the purchase. The existence of a burial board was not at that time referred to in the correspondence with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. In view of doubts whether any burial board had ever been duly constituted, and of the fact that (unknown to the Commissioners) interments had actually taken place, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners decided in 1896 to make a free gift of the land, which was conveyed under the provisions of the Church Building Acts, and by virtue of the 8 and 9 Vict., c. 70, sec. 13, the freehold upon consecration vests in the incumbent of Mathry for the time being. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners do not propose to take any further steps in the matter.

RATES ON HOSPITALS.

SIR CAMERON GULL (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, having regard to the representations made to Her Majesty's Government through the President of the Local Government Board, he can state if the Government will this session undertake legislation relieving hospitals in Great Britain from local rates.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have already, as the hon. Member is no doubt aware, expressed sympathy with the object which my hon. friend has in view. The question is surrounded with considerable difficulty; and the best plan, I think, would be to have a Committee of the House to deal with the subject.

NATIONAL COAL SUPPLY — WELSH ANTHRACITE COAL — SUGGESTED INQUIRY.

GENERAL RUSSELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, in view of the importance to this country of there being a supply of smokeless coal always available for the use of the Navy, the Government can see their way to causing an inquiry to be instituted by a committee of experts into the present extent and probable duration at the present rate of consumption of the Welsh anthracite coal measures, with a view to prevent undue depletion of the same before it is too late to avert such a national misfortune.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that a fresh survey of the Welsh coal measures is now being carried on by the Geological Survey of Great Britain. If the hon. Member asks for my own private opinion, it is that long before the coal-field approaches exhaustion we shall have learnt enough about the combustion of coal to prevent our fleets from being necessarily dependent upon it.

RAILWAYS (PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS) BILL.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, inasmuch as the Official Returns show that in 1898 522 railway servants were killed and 12,826 were injured in the performance of their duty, that the recent Royal Commission on Accidents to Railway Servants has declared that lives that could be saved are lost, and men are injured unnecessarily, and has unanimously made recommendations with a view to remedy this state of things, he can now state when the Bill which has been introduced by the President of the Board of Trade to give effect to these recommendations will be effectually proceeded with.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I can give no pledges in regard to this Bill in the present state of public business.

MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could give an assurance that the Bill would be taken at all this session.

[No answer was returned.]

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY: Is there any doubt in the right hon. Gentleman's mind that the Bill will be taken this session?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It has been taken.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY: I mean the Second Reading.

[No answer was given.]

SCOTTISH FISHERY HARBOURS— OLD SLAINES, ABERDEENSHIRE.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the attention of the Government has been directed to the migration during last week of the whole of the inhabitants of the fishing village of Old Slaines, in Aberdeenshire, to the neighbourhood of Aberdeen, owing to the failure of the fishing caused by excessive trawling and want of harbour accommodation; and whether they are prepared to take any steps to prevent further depletion of the country population and the loss caused to these people by the abandonment of their homes.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I regret to learn from the hon. Member of the wholesale migration referred to, from whatever cause arising; but I think there may be causes at work other than those mentioned in the question. It is not practicable to intervene in a special case, but the Government has always kept in view the general interests of line fishermen.

ABERDEEN POST OFFICE.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works when it is intended to begin the building of the new post office at Aberdeen; a portion of the sum to be expended in the erection of which, although a small sum, appears in the Estimates for the coming financial year.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I am afraid it will not be possible to begin the erection of the Aberdeen post office building until late in the year. To my regret, I find myself unable to provide in the Estimates more than would enable me to commence the

work. The right hon. Gentleman may rely upon me to see that it shall be taken in hand as early in the autumn as possible.

ARMAGH POSTAL SERVICE.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Tweedmouth Committee recommended the abolition of classification in the postal telegraph service, what is the maximum of the scale attached to the class of clerks at Armagh, how many men at Armagh belong to the clerkship class, their length of service and present salary, what is the number of sorting clerks and telegraphists at Armagh, the maximum of the scale for men of this class, how many men have obtained the maximum, how long have they been in that position, what is their length of service, and what is their future prospect.

MR. HANBURY: Lord Tweedmouth's Committee recommended the amalgamation into one of the first and second classes of telegraphists, and this recommendation was duly carried out. It did not affect the Armagh office at which there was no first class. There is only one officer of the rank of clerk at Armagh. He performs supervising duties and the maximum of his scale is £170 a year which he attained in October, 1898, after a service of seventeen years. There are nine sorting clerks and telegraphists. The maximum of their scale is 40s. a week, which has been reached by two men only (in 1897). The service of one dates from December, 1882, and of the other from May, 1873, but the latter was transferred to Armagh from another office in 1892. Their future prospect, so far as the Armagh office is concerned, depends upon their qualifications for promotion and on the occurrence of vacancies in superior positions, but, of course, it is always open to these officers to apply for transfer to more important offices possessing higher scales. The maximum of the scale for sorting clerks and telegraphists at Armagh was raised from 38s. to 40s. a week in accordance with the recommendations of the Tweedmouth Committee.

ARMS REGULATIONS IN IRELAND— CASE OF THOMAS BRADY.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he

is aware that Thomas Brady, Ballinaglera, County Leitrim, was convicted on 5th July, 1898, for firing at the person and placed under a rule of bail, was again convicted on 12th July, 1899, for threatening and placed again under a rule of bail, and on 26th December, 1899, was a third time convicted for assaulting the police; did the Government on any occasion estreat his recognisances; and do they still license the convict to carry firearms.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): On the 21st February and 15th June, 1899, my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary replied very fully to questions addressed to him by the hon. Gentleman in reference to the case of this man, Thomas Brady, and his conviction in July, 1898. In July, 1899, he was ordered to find bail to be of good behaviour for using threatening language, and in December he was fined for drunkenness and for assaulting a constable. The answer to the second and third paragraphs is in the negative. Brady's licence to carry firearms was revoked in January, 1891.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it not a breach of good behaviour to assault the police?

*MR. ATKINSON: Yes, Sir.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN— RELIGIOUS TESTS.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, although an Act was passed abolishing religious tests in Trinity College, Dublin, in the examinations for sizarship, for which it is alleged Roman Catholics may enter, the Irish professor, who is a member of and in receipt of income as professor from a society founded to induce Roman Catholics to change their religion, instead of examining in Irish literature, sets students the doctrinal parts of the Protestant version of the Scriptures; and will the Government consider whether any steps should be taken to prevent such practices which may constitute an evasion of the statute.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], 21st Feb., 1899, Vol. lxxvii., page 51; 15th June, 1899, Vol. lxxii., page 1189.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): I have referred this question to the Vice-Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, who has informed me that the Irish Society, to which allusion is made, was established in 1818 for providing the Scriptural education and religious instruction of the Irish speaking population chiefly through the medium of their own language. In or about 1843 this society raised by subscription a fund for founding and endowing a professorship of Irish in Trinity College. The amount subscribed, which was invested in Government securities, produced only £70 a year. The Board of Trinity College undertook to increase the endowment to £100 a year, it being made a condition that the professor should be subject to the jurisdiction of the Board in the same manner as all other professors, and the power of appointment to the professorship was vested in trustees who are independent of the society. The Vice-Provost states there is no foundation for the assertion that the professor "instead of examining in Irish literature sets students the doctrinal parts of the Protestant version of the Scriptures," as a reference to the examination papers, which are published each year, will show. The copy of the Scriptures used is the same, I understand, as that used at examinations of the Royal University by the Rev. E. Hogan, S.J., and passages set for translation are very often taken from the works of the Rev. G. Keating, another Roman Catholic Divine.

LAND SALES—SKERITT ESTATE, CO CLARE.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in the sale of the Skeritt estate in county Clare to the tenants.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The request of the Land Judge for an inspection and valuation of this estate under the 40th Section of the Land Act, 1896, was received by the Land Commissioners in December last. The inspector to whom the matter has been referred will shortly visit the estate.

PORTAFERRY—ALLEGED NIGHT POLICE VISIT.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for

Ireland whether he will state by whose orders, on the night of the 5th instant, when darkness had set in, a body of police was drafted into the town of Portaferry, across Strangford Lough, and, after patrolling the village for some hours, retired as they came; and upon what information this movement was ordered, and had it any relation to the attacks recently committed on the Presbyterian National School in Portaferry.

MR. ATKINSON: The hon. Member seems to have been entirely misinformed. The incident referred to is imaginary. No police were brought across Strangford Lough, as alleged.

PORTADOWN DISTURBANCES.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether, at the Portadown Petty Sessions on Monday last, a number of persons were charged with throwing stones at the police and with breaking windows in the houses of several inhabitants of the town; and were the accused identified by police witnesses as being in the mobs by whom the damage was done; if so, what punishment did they receive.

MR. ATKINSON: By the evidence produced before the magistrates it was proved that the several persons charged were in the crowd from which the stones were thrown, but it was not established that any of them participated in the stone-throwing. On these grounds the magistrates, while most severely condemning the disturbances which took place, felt themselves unable to convict any of the accused. No punishment was, therefore, inflicted.

ROMAN CATHOLIC DISABILITIES.— JUDGE O'BRIEN'S WILL.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that the late Judge William O'Brien willed his library to the Jesuit Fathers in Dublin, and that the bequest was not carried into effect because of the legal disabilities affecting Roman Catholics still on the statute book; and whether he proposes to take any step for the removal of these disabilities.

MR. ATKINSON: I am not aware that any case dealing with the construction of the late judge's will has come before any court of justice. It is quite

competent for testators by adopting well-known forms of bequest to secure to members of these bodies the practical enjoyment of property. Whether the late learned judge adopted one of these forms or not I do not know. The reply to the last paragraph is in the negative.

IRISH PRISON OFFICIALS—CASE OF WARDER FLYNN.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been drawn to the case of a prison warder named Edward Flynn, who, after nearly thirteen years in the service of the Prisons Board and seven years in the Army, having served through the Afghanistan War under Lord Roberts, was dismissed from Waterford Prison for alleged insubordination, and will he explain why his request for a sworn inquiry to be held was refused; will he explain why, when charges involving dismissal are made against prison warders, the person charged is not allowed, as in the case of the Royal Irish Constabulary, to have the assistance of a solicitor at the inquiry; also, why Flynn's request to be allowed to have legal assistance at the inquiry held concerning his case by Inspector Harol was denied; and whether, in consideration of the distinguished services and good character of Flynn, he will order a sworn inquiry into this case, and allow Flynn to have the help of his solicitor.

MR. ATKINSON: Edward Flynn served as prison warder for a period of twelve and a half years. He was dismissed from the service in February of last year for insubordination, persistent disobedience of orders, breach of prison rules, and conduct contrary to good order and discipline. Prior to his appointment as warder he had been in the Army, but I have no information as to whether he did, or did not, serve through the Afghanistan War under Lord Roberts. His character as a warder was not good. Flynn did not ask for a sworn inquiry into the charges on which he was dismissed. These charges he admitted. His request for an inquiry was made partly in respect of a very trivial charge which did not involve dismissal, and partly with the object of preferring charges against the governor of the

prison, which he refused to specify beforehand in writing in the ordinary way. When sworn inquiries are held into charges against prison warders the persons charged are generally allowed to have the assistance of a solicitor. In the present case, as I have stated, no such inquiry was held. Having admitted the charges on which he was dismissed it was not necessary to hold an inquiry to investigate their truth, nor is it intended now to reconsider the case.

MULLINGAR DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that Dr. Courtenay, one of the Irish Inspectors of Lunacy, recently held an inquiry in the Mullingar District Lunatic Asylum touching the death, through alleged ill-treatment or negligence on the part of some of the attendants, of a patient named Reilly in that institution; and that the inspector declined to admit any representative of the press to the said inquiry; will he explain why no answer has been given to a resolution passed by the committee of management expressing regret at this exclusion, and requesting an explanation from the inspectors; and whether he will give instructions to the inspectors to have all such similar inquiries in future open to the press, so that the public, the friends of patients, the ratepayers who are taxed for the maintenance of the institution, and the electors who control the committee, should have an opportunity of getting independent information as to the proceedings which, though relating to matters of discipline, affect the lives of people unable to look after themselves.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The facts are correctly stated in the first paragraph. A resolution was received by the inspectors expressing the regret of the committee of management that the press had been excluded from the inquiry, but no request for an explanation has been received by the inspectors. With regard to the third paragraph, the inspector, influenced by a regard for the feelings and interests of the insane and their friends, in the exercise of the discretion vested in him by Statute, excluded the press from the

inquiry held in the present instance. The evidence taken at such inquiries is always forwarded by the inspectors, together with their own report thereon to the committee of management, and if the committee, regardless of the pain which the publication of the names, delusions and other weaknesses of the patients must, in many cases, inflict upon their friends and relatives, take upon themselves the responsibility of publishing the evidence, they are of course at liberty to do so. It has always been the practice to exclude the press from such inquiries in Ireland, and, so far as I am aware, a similar method is followed in England also.

IRISH MARKET TOLLS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether powers are given in the Local Government (Ireland) Act to rural district councils to purchase or lease the rights of collecting tolls for markets and fairs held by certain landlords, and to change the dates for existing fairs and markets, and to establish new ones; and whether the powers go to the extent of compelling a landlord to sell.

MR. ATKINSON: The reply to both paragraphs of the question is in the negative.

MUZZLING ORDER IN COUNTY DUBLIN.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he intends to rescind the Dog Muzzling Order in the county Dublin.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. PLUNKETT, Dublin County, S.): This matter is now under consideration, and I hope it may be found possible to withdraw the muzzling order from the county Dublin in the near future.

IRISH FINANCIAL RELATIONS—GOVERNMENT STORES—COMPARATIVE OUTLAY IN THE THREE KINGDOMS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will sanction a Return showing the comparative outlay in England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively on foot of Government stores and supplies purchased since the beginning of the current finan-

cial year, 1st April, 1899, to present time, in view of the importance of this information in its bearing on the question of the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland, which is down for discussion on an early date.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot give the information which the hon. Gentleman asks for, in detail, as I think he is already aware, but I hope that to-morrow or Thursday I may be able to give him in the rough some of the information he desires.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Inasmuch as there is a debate bearing on this question on Thursday, will the right hon. Gentleman endeavour to give me the figures to-morrow or Wednesday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am quite aware for what purposes the figures are asked for, and I shall be glad to give them to-morrow if I can get them from the War Office. But as the House knows, that office is extremely hard worked just now, and I cannot be sure whether I can get them by then.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Will the right hon. Gentleman state what will be the first Order to-morrow, and on Thursday and Friday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The first Order to-morrow will be the next stage of the Consolidated Fund Bill. After that it is impossible for me to make a definite promise, because I cannot foresee what course the House will desire to take to-night with regard to the Finance Bill. I have ground for hoping, after what took place on Friday last, that there will not be any difficulty in getting through the Second Reading stage at a comparatively early hour to-night. If I am disappointed in that prospect I may have to take it to-morrow. On Thursday an opportunity is to be given to hon. Members from Ireland to discuss the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland. I cannot absolutely say in what form or on what motion that discussion will take place, but I am bound to give hon. Members a full opportunity to carry out that discussion. On Friday the Speaker will be moved out of the Chair on the Civil Service Estimates, and I understand the hon. Member desires to raise the ques-

tion of university education in Ireland for Roman Catholics.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he intends to proceed with the Second Reading of the Finance Bill after ten o'clock to-night, and whether in view of the far reaching nature of some of the proposals he does not think that further time should be granted for its consideration.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir.

MR. LOUGH: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman caught my point. I wish to know whether he intends to insist on getting the Second Reading at ten o'clock if the debate is not then concluded.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is not a proper question. It is not right to ask a Minister if he intends to insist on taking a division at a particular hour. He cannot insist.

MR. LOUGH: Yes; because the First Lord said on Friday night—

*MR. SPEAKER: I heard what the right hon. Gentleman said. I repeat that the hon. Gentleman's question is quite irregular.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): Is it intended to take Order No. 10 to-night, and if so, will it be brought on at a time which will enable a full discussion to be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no chance of taking it to-night.

NEW WRIT.

For the Borough of Finsbury (Holborn Division), in the room of the Right Hon. Sir Charles Hall, K.C.M.G., Q.C., deceased.

FINANCE BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I think the House should consider the speed with

which this Bill is being rushed through, and I confess I do not see the slightest reason why the Budget should have been taken out of its usual time. The War Loan Bill could have been immediately disposed of, and would have met all the immediate necessities of the war, and the Government might have waited until the usual time before the Budget was introduced or the Finance Bill brought forward. The pretext is, of course, the necessities for the war in South Africa, but events are happening so quickly there that those necessities may be modified, that it would have been wiser to have waited until the actual requirements of the country were ascertained. I also regret the attitude which has been assumed on this side of the House with reference to the Budget. It is the most oppressive Budget that has been introduced for fifty years, and yet there is hardly a disposition shown on the Liberal side, or, indeed, in any part of the House, to criticise a single provision of the Bill. What is the reason? The reason is that the Liberal Leaders and other members of the Opposition desire that the Government shall not be obstructed in finding the money for the prosecution of the war. But surely that desire does not make it necessary for my hon. friends to acquiesce in proposals of any kind which may be brought before them. I think that the haste with which the House is accepting this sweeping Budget is all the more to be deplored because these annual occasions are the only opportunity the House has of considering the financial system of the country. At least once a year we should examine the principles on which that financial system is founded. It appears to be thought that the principles of free trade demand that taxes should be levied on five or six commodities used by the people. They have been invested with a sort of sacredness by Chancellors of the Exchequer, who keep on ringing the changes on these commodities, and no one has done more in that direction than the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. But there is nothing particularly sacred about these articles. If money is wanted, and it is decided to raise it by indirect taxation, the time has come to consider whether some new subject of taxation ought not to be found, because the people interested in these trades and in these commodities are being unfairly treated. A new principle should now be adopted. I think that the Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer is raising a great deal too much money out of drink. Last year the amount was £36,000,000, and it is now proposed to raise two or three millions more. We have had a number of extraordinary facts laid before us recently by the Royal Commission on the Licensing Laws, and no Member of this House can look with unqualified satisfaction at the extent to which the State is interested in the drink traffic. In Ireland and Scotland a huge revenue is collected from it, and extraordinary revelations have been made of the moral and material damage done, especially to the people of Ireland, by the trade. Yet the House is interested in it to a great extent. The State sells licences for the sale of drink in places which are not fit for anyone to eat or drink in, it levies a huge tax on every gallon of the infamous liquor sold, and it is, therefore, far from being in a free position to take any steps to decrease the evils connected with the traffic. There are twenty-six new imposts in this oppressive Budget, and the total amount to be raised by them is stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be twelve and one-third millions; but the amount is, I think, greatly under-estimated. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has always under-estimated his revenue. Last year it was under-estimated by five millions, and this year the under-estimate will be almost as large. The under-estimate is particularly noticeable in the case of the tea tax. Last year it produced four and a quarter millions, and for his increase of 50 per cent. the right hon. Gentleman only adds £1,800,000. I think he might well have estimated for another £200,000. Again, in the matter of the income tax, the estimated produce for last year is £18,800,000. He raises the tax 50 per cent., but only anticipates receiving an additional six and a half millions. I think that is an under-estimate of a million. I hold it is a great pity these under-estimates should be made. Again, in my opinion, the teetotallers, who are being made to bear the heaviest burden, have been unfairly treated in the Budget. The hon. Gentleman evidently intended to put a little on everybody, but while he has added 50 per cent. to the tea duty, he has only put 15 per cent. on beer, 12½ per cent. on tobacco, and 5 per cent. on spirits. Supposing we include the teetotal articles, tea and tobacco, the new impost will increase the amount raised

upon these two articles 20 per cent., but if we take the other two articles, beer and spirits, the increase is only between 8 and 10 per cent. I will put it another way. We raised last year on tea and tobacco fifteen millions; next year we will raise three millions more, or a total of eighteen millions. But we raised thirty-five millions from beer and spirits, and that would be only raised two and three-quarter millions. That shows that the teatotalers have not been fairly treated in the Budget, and we should have some explanation from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think it is most undesirable that all these taxes should have been raised, if not absolutely necessary; and if it can be proved by one or two figures that these increases might have been avoided, then I think a case can be made against the Budget. It may be very bold of me to suggest that these increases might have been avoided, but I venture to do so. When you remember that you have six millions of extra revenue provided by taxation this year, it was not necessary to impose all these new taxes, which will bring in vast sums of money. The theory is that as we are at war we should find a large contribution to the cost out of taxes of the year. But in the year that ends 1st April we found six millions that was not raised in the year before the war commenced. If we put on no increased taxation next year, we would have seven millions for the war. Then, suppose we put on 2d. on the income tax, we would have eleven millions next year and thirteen millions the year after. If the House has followed the figures, there would have been thirty millions for the war in three years—1899-1900-1. I think that would have been a very respectable contribution to the war. And when you add to that the thirty millions that were borrowed on loan, then, I think, the war expenditure might have been disposed of, especially as I still hope the war will not cost the large amount provided by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If I have shown that it was not necessary to disturb all these trades and to put on twenty-six new taxes, and that one tax would have been enough, surely I have made out a case against the Budget. But there is one provision in the Budget to which I have not alluded which seems to me to be the very worst in the whole series, and that is the new tax on brokers.

Mr. Lough.

If I knew that that was absolutely withdrawn, or if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would tell me now that it was absolutely withdrawn, I would not refer to it further.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): It is withdrawn.

MR. LOUGH: Very well. I wish it had been done by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a formal manner. I have a great hatred of these stamp duties, and I would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give me a return of the stamp duties imposed during the last twenty-five or thirty years, and the amounts they yielded. I believe that we shall soon not be able to turn round without having a stamp put on us if we do not keep our eye on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman hints that he is going to make an alternative proposal, but I would plead with him to abandon the proposal altogether. He has gone as far as he can go when he dealt with stamps on stock and security contracts, and I would warn him not to make matters any worse by imposing stamp duties on transactions in merchandise. The clause was bad enough in the resolution as it was passed, but now, when we see the Bill, it is a good deal worse. The clause added to the Budget brought three new classes of informers on the scene: first, those who would get a reward for telling of any transactions made without a contract; second, those who would tell if a contract was not stamped; and third, those who would inform if the stamp was not of the right amount. I say that trade and commerce could not be carried on under such conditions. The only other point I want to mention—perhaps the most important point of all—is the effect this Budget will have upon Ireland. Now, this subject has been already discussed this session, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer made a promise which I will recall to him. In the debate on the Address the condition of Ireland was brought before him by the Irish Members, and the right hon. Gentleman used these words—

"I would just observe in passing that it does not at all follow, assuming there be in-

* See *The Parliamentary Debates*, 9th February, 1900 [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxviii., page 1092.

justice to Ireland in the present system, that it would be aggravated by an increase of taxation. Hon. Members who have examined this question know that a greater percentage of certain taxes, according to the calculations which have been made of the true revenue raised in both countries, is raised in Ireland, as compared with the rest of the United Kingdom, than of other taxes. For example, suppose—hon. Members will remember I am not in any way suggesting anything with regard to future taxation; it is much too early in February to do that—but suppose for a moment that it was necessary to raise revenue by largely increased taxation on account of the war, and that the whole of the increase was raised by direct taxation, certainly that would not aggravate any injustice Members from Ireland complain of; that must be admitted by hon. Members opposite. The simple fact is this: Ireland pays a very much less proportion of direct taxation than she pays of indirect taxation, or of direct and indirect taxation taken together.”

I think anyone who listened to these words would say that they almost amount to a promise by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that any new taxes which he might have to introduce would not press heavily on Ireland. If he made any such promise as that, he has not followed it up in the Budget before us.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH dissented.

*MR. LOUGH: I think that the right hon. Gentleman's statement that hon. Members ought not to assume that new taxes would unnecessarily press upon Ireland might be interpreted in that way.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH again dissented.

*MR. LOUGH: Well, I leave it at that. If these taxes had been devised to press heavily upon Ireland, it would have been impossible to make them more onerous than they are. In a former debate I gave an estimate of the amount which these taxes may produce in Ireland, though on looking further into the matter I believe it was an under-estimate. I think they will produce £1,100,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer shakes his head, but I have given very close attention to the produce of these Irish taxes, and I must say that, making even a reasonable estimate, it looks to me as if some such amount as I have mentioned might be produced. I shall just mention the figures. I think the tea tax will produce another £300,000, the tobacco tax £160,000, alcohol £270,000, income tax

£350,000, and stamps £20,000, or a total of £1,100,000. Now, that is an unprecedented blow to Ireland. Not since 1801 has this House in any Budget laid on £1,100,000 of extra taxation on Ireland; and that it should be done on this drowsy afternoon without an Irish Member being present—[An HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!]
—seems to me one of the most astonishing things when we consider the present state of that country. It is not as if this Budget stood alone. We have had a Report on Irish taxation, and that Report stated that Ireland was overtaxed by nearly three millions a year, and within seven years of that Report being issued five millions of taxation will be wrung out of Ireland by this House more than the Royal Commission declared would be just under all the circumstances if this Budget is passed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had very correctly stated the principle under which these huge sums were raised in Ireland. That principle, which the right hon. Gentleman said he would stick to till his latest breath—which we all hope will be far distant—is that every person in Ireland should pay per head the same amount of taxation on the same articles as is paid in England. [HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!]
Now, that seems a simple statement, and superficially a just statement. [HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!]
Hon. Members opposite admit that. I recognise with the greatest candour that it is a point we have got to contest; but I want to submit some figures to the House to show that you cannot possibly, with any regard to the historic progress of these two countries, carry out that programme. What I propose to do is to quote six figures and six dates stretching over 200 years, to show the proportion that each person in England pays in comparison with each person in Ireland, and to demonstrate that a violent change has taken place on the old system of taxation. In 1690 every person in Great Britain paid £5 7s. for every £1 a person in Ireland paid; in 1760, £6 9s.; in 1815, £5 7s.; in 1837—I take this year because it was the commencement of the Queen's reign—£4 was paid by every person in Great Britain for every £1 paid per person in Ireland; in 1857 it had fallen to £2 in Great Britain for £1 in Ireland; and in 1897 it had again fallen to £1 6s. per head in England, to £1 per head in Ireland.

Now, you see exactly what we are doing ; we are altering the historic disproportion that has existed between these two islands. For 200 years the rich people of Great Britain paid five times as much as the poor people in Ireland, and the load upon the English people was like a feather upon their shoulders, while the Irish people groaned beneath the smaller burden. But within the last fifty years we have changed all that, and now the Chancellor of the Exchequer says that he will insist to his dying day on the necessity of the principle that every person in Ireland shall pay practically the same as every person in Great Britain. If the House insists in carrying out that principle, it will commit the greatest iniquity that a democratic assembly ever committed against a people placed in their charge. They might just as well say that the miserable people of India or of Iceland are as able to bear taxation as the people of Great Britain. They cannot do it, because they have not got it. Within the last fifty years we have destroyed the historic proportion of taxation, while England has progressed in prosperity, and Ireland has simply gone to rack and ruin. Let me just take the question of population. During the last fifty years in this country, the population has doubled, and that that is not the case in Ireland is the fault of this House. In Ireland during the same period the population has decreased by half. Hon. Members no doubt think that has changed now, but that is not so, because last year—1899—the emigrations from Ireland were 9,000 more than they were in 1898, so that the decrease in the population is continuing and growing worse. Then take the figures as to pauperism. Between 1864 and 1898 pauperism in Ireland has doubled, whilst in Great Britain it has decreased by half. In 1899 there was a terrible increase in pauperism ; the number of paupers increased from 115 per thousand in 1898 to 124 per thousand in 1899. I will not go further into details which are perfectly familiar to the House, but these are facts of great significance. Here you have two islands, one growing richer and richer every year, and the other going to utter ruin, and yet you apply the same fiscal system to both. There never was a time when the sentiment of the people of England, from the Queen downwards to the poorest in the land, was more kindly

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disposed to Ireland than to-day ; and what is the barrier between ? The barrier which stands between the rich island and her poor sister is this House, which heaps new burdens to the extent of millions of pounds on the taxpayers of Ireland. Looking at recent events we may say : “ Fair words will butter no parsnips.” If this House places upon Ireland new burdens such as those disclosed in this Budget, it is not the slightest use to organise a new regiment of Guards to wear the shamrock on St. Patrick’s Day, or to organise State visits to Dublin. This House ought to be just and fair, and let the goodwill of the people flow freely across the Channel. If any hon. Member on this side of the House had moved that the Finance Bill should be read to-day six months, I should have supported the motion, but in the present condition of opinion I fear it is useless to make any protest.

*MR. MENDEL (Plymouth) said he was to a considerable extent in agreement with what had been said by the hon. Member for West Islington with regard to finding new subjects for taxation always within a fiscal system based on free trade. But when his hon. friend said that this was an oppressive Budget he frankly disagreed with him, and with respect he submitted that the hon. Gentleman had not proved that contention even with regard to Ireland. Although it might be true that Ireland’s burdens would be increased by indirect taxation, it must be remembered that the increase of the income tax, which was by far the largest increase in taxation this year, would fall with greater severity upon the people of this country than upon the people of Ireland. To his mind this Budget ought to receive the support of both sides of the House. It was a frank, straightforward, and honest Budget, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not resorted to tricks and subterfuges. Those who held the opinion that we ought to carry the war to a successful issue were bound to approve, on the whole, the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There were obviously only two alternatives before the right hon. Gentleman ; he might have borrowed, or imposed fresh taxation. Neither of those two alternatives would have been right alone. If he had borrowed all the money necessary for the prosecution of the war, he would have

led this country into great financial peril, and possibly disaster, and bred carelessness in our people as to war. Had the right hon. Gentleman imposed taxation alone, and not borrowed, it would have been an unjust and impossible policy, and a piece of pedantic finance. What commended this Budget to himself and he thought the large majority of the House, was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had happily blended both principles. It was, of course, quite right to suspend the Sinking Fund this year, and those who disapproved last year could not only consistently support the suspension now, but could even point out that last year it was suspended by an amount which, capitalised, exceeded the total estimated cost of the war up to September 30th. This showed what a valuable war chest the Sinking Fund was. It was a pity the right hon. Gentleman did not wait until this year to suspend the fund. His method of borrowing by separate loan was also to be commended. It was most essential that the Transvaal should in some form or other be called upon to pay some considerable portion of the cost of the war, and the security for that must be Imperial control. The right hon. Gentleman was perfectly right in increasing taxation. To raise the income tax was just and right, as was also the raising of the taxation on beer and spirits. As regarded the income tax, there was, however, the obvious fact that the increase would fall with great severity on those who derived their incomes from trade or professions, which incomes were very uncertain. The very large increase proposed this year showed the great necessity that existed for a differentiation between certain and uncertain incomes, and for a graduation of incomes. A large and sudden increase like that now proposed made the injustice of the present system more apparent. He knew there was great difficulty in both these reforms; but surely, at any rate, the increase might have been arranged so as to fall more heavily on the larger than on the smaller incomes. With regard to the increase in the tea duty, he doubted the justice or policy of the rise. It was by far the highest increase compared with the increases on beer and spirits. He would go further, and say that the tea duty ought to have been reduced last year or in 1898 instead of the tobacco duty. The very large

majority of opinion in the country would convince the Chancellor of the Exchequer that that reduction had not gone into the pockets of those for whom it was intended, but into the pockets of the tobacco trade. Had the right hon. Gentleman, moreover, taken off the twopence on tea last year he would have had a much stronger case for imposing it this year in case of emergency. Even now the right hon. Gentleman had not reimposed the whole amount which he took off tobacco last year. He took off sixpence and put on fourpence. He would have been a great deal better advised had he left the tea duty alone, as the commodity had become a comfort and a necessity for the poor. He thought the taxation of the country was raised from too narrow a source—[Hear, hear!]
—but he could not agree with the hon. Gentleman opposite, the Member for Thanet, when he advocated taxation of the necessities of life or the taxation of the commodities which entered into the trade and industry of this country. It was indisputable that Chancellors of the Exchequer had too narrow a basis for indirect taxation. From Customs and Excise last year a sum of fifty-three millions was raised, and that from very few articles.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin):
And why not?

*MR. MENDEL said for many reasons. Supposing temperance reformers succeeded in greatly reducing the consumption of intoxicants, as he hoped they would, there would be a considerable fall in the drink revenue, and then where would the Chancellor of the Exchequer be? Obviously if people did not spend so much money on drink they would be able to spend more money in other ways, but in raising this huge revenue from drink, and at the same time promoting the cause of temperance, they were engaged in two rather inconsistent operations, and it would be very much better for the financial position of this country if there were a far larger field from which to raise revenue. He disagreed with the idea that in time of crises like this they should not reform the financial resources and methods of taxation. In ordinary times, when revenue and expenditure about balanced, the argument was strong for continuing the existing system. He was impressed with the importance of

taking stock of our financial resources. It was at a time like this, when a large expenditure was demanded for national objects, that a great Finance Minister should seriously consider the whole basis of taxation and revenue. There were sources from which might be extracted a large revenue—for instance, land in towns. He rejoiced in the great prosperity of the country, but could the continuance of that prosperity be guaranteed? The last two years had been years of great commercial prosperity, but in the natural course of events they would at some time or other possibly give place to trade depression. Then, where would our expanding revenue be? It was to meet this vast and ever-growing expenditure that there should be got into the meshes of the Chancellor of the Exchequer all the subjects of taxation which it was right should contribute towards it, and so broaden and widen the financial system under which we lived.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Although I approach the subject from a very different standpoint from that of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, I cordially endorse many of the concluding remarks in his speech. He pointed out that we had been passing through abnormally good times and spending more and more money every year. I am now speaking outside the requirements of the war. I remember the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire making a very eloquent appeal to this House to afford support for the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the time being by curtailing the tendency of the House of Commons to increase expenditure. I told him at the time that the reason of that tendency was because inevitably the mass of the taxation fell, comparatively, on a small number of people, and that the responsibility for the expenditure did not fall upon the set of people who paid the piper, and so had a right to call the tune. There is one thing in which I do not agree with the hon. Gentleman opposite, and that is the question of the tea duty. If the tea duty had not been increased, but left at the figure to which it was reduced a year or two ago, it would come to this, that there would be a very large mass of the people who, without this duty, would contribute little or nothing to national requirements. As I said the other day, there is a wide-

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spread feeling of disappointment at the Budget of my right hon. friend, and what we have heard from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Plymouth shows that that disappointment is not confined to the financial world. My right hon. friend has taken upon himself to lay down doctrines which portend great danger in the future. I think the right hon. Gentleman had a great opportunity. It is perfectly true that if all financiers availed themselves of similar opportunities they would do more mischief than if they altered the fiscal system in a dangerous direction, and the hon. Gentleman opposite was quite right in saying that Mr. Gladstone himself felt that in critical times a Chancellor of the Exchequer might be justified in saying that it was undesirable to raise wide differences of opinion in this country. The right hon. Gentleman does not take that timid view. He does not take refuge behind that argument. He says—

“Shall we confess to the world that a few months of war has frightened us from a financial policy we know to be sound?”

SIR M. HICKS BEACH explained the sense in which he used the expression.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I do not wish to do the right hon. Gentleman the injustice of attributing to him a defence of our whole financial policy, but he has rigidly adhered to the system this year. The normal increase of taxation and expenditure requires very careful consideration at the hands of the House. The Civil Service Estimates are mostly responsible for the deplorable position of our financial system. We find year after year an automatic increase of expenditure, and when we try to curtail it we are told that it is regulated by statute. This House, which is supposed to be all powerful in finance, cannot without the assent of the other House of Parliament interfere with it, and this is the constitutional doctrine that the Commons House of Parliament is met with in these days—in other words, that expenditure is beyond our control. It was said just now, with perfect truth, that the limited number of articles on which taxation falls renders us incapable of dealing with any great demand beyond the ordinary requirements. I go further, and I say that, framed as our financial policy now is, it has already proved itself, and is bound in

the future to prove itself, unequal to the automatic normal increase I have referred to. If that time has come, the receipts from customs and excise are bound to go down. Are you prepared to continue this policy? I do not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer could rise and tell us any one item which could be dealt with if the direct revenue falls substantially short in the course of future years. He knows very well that Parliament has committed itself to a continually increasing system of expenditure, and that if taxes as they are now framed do not meet the requirements they will have to pay the increase, or some other system must be employed in their room; and that leads me to ask whether the time has not arrived when this question must be fairly faced. I know that my right hon. friend is hopeless in certain directions. I am not going to waste the time of the House giving the old remedies, though I can only say in passing that I should wish my right hon. friend to consider them, and I will add that I am more than ever convinced that we shall never have our financial system on a sound basis until many old opinions and prejudices have been cast to the wind. Now, the Chancellor of the Exchequer must observe that many taxes going, at any rate, largely in a direction which would be stigmatised as protectionist, have been added in quarters which certainly are free from any taint of suspicion of protectionist heresies. I observe that a suggestion for the restoration of the old shilling duty on corn has been very widely advocated in non-protectionist circles. I would describe that as a very slight and halting step in the right direction, but I have never made myself responsible for such a suggestion at any time, and more than that, I never advocated any specific or fixed duty at all. What I have advocated have been importation duties on a sliding scale, with the view of fixing as far as it can be done the price of the necessities of life in order to avoid the chopping, the ups and downs, and changes in the market so far as possible. But I have sometimes quoted specific duties for the purpose of illustration, and for the purpose of illustration only. I will remind the House that my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in reply to a question addressed to him—I think it was two years ago—estimated that the financial effect of the imposition of this

shilling importation duty would be to produce to the Exchequer in the financial year in which he spoke close upon two and a half millions. The actual figures he gave were £2,450,000, and consequently a duty of 5s.—using that figure for the purpose of estimating the amount—would bring in twelve millions and a quarter, while a duty of 10s. would bring in over twenty-four millions. I have no doubt we will be told that it would be a most oppressive tax to put on 1s. and raise the price of bread to the poor people; and as to 5s., that would be an absolutely ruinous and starvation figure. Therefore I must remind the House of what the actual effect to the community would be of these figures. I cannot tell the House what the effect of the shilling duty would be, because I believe it would be absolutely nil in the way of price, but if it was not nil it would be so infinitesimal that it is hardly worth troubling the House with. The effect of 5s. is calculated, and I believe it is accurately calculated, to produce these financial results. It would involve additional taxation, to be provided from some source or another. I am not going to say what source it would be, and I do not say whether it would be obtained on the theory of two-thirds being paid by merchants and others, and that a smaller proportion would be paid by the consumers. I am assuming that all would be paid by the consumers, and I challenge contradiction when I say that the utmost it could amount to per unit of the population per day would be the very large figure of one half of a farthing. That is called a mite, and I am not sure whether that is still a current coin. It was so in former days. That would be the result of a 5s. duty on corn. I think I have shown the House that it would be infinitesimal. It would amount to seven-eighths of a penny per week per unit of the population, or 3s. 9½d. per year. My object in referring to this is to show that the right hon. Gentleman or his successors will some day or other have to face something in the way of old age pensions. Someone will have to do that. Perhaps my right hon. friend is not himself prepared to face that question. I don't know whether he is or not. Any step taken by Parliament in the direction of old age pensions would be sheer socialism unless it was accompanied by some financial provision ensuring that every

person deriving the benefit of such a system should personally contribute substantially towards that emolument. Therefore I think we should not overlook the fact that on so very modest a contribution as I have mentioned we could obtain twelve millions almost unknown and unobserved from the taxpayers of this country. With regard to the particular Budget now before us, my right hon. friend has steered clear, as he tells us, of novelties and of new taxes in addition to those which already lay to his hand. I suppose it would be almost useless calling the attention of the House to the fact that the moment was singularly appropriate for meeting the wishes which have been so loudly expressed in Parliament of the great self-governing colonies that steps should be taken in the direction of establishing preferential trading among the various elements of the Empire. The Ottawa conference showed that that was practically the unanimous opinion of the self-governing colonies of the Empire. Only the other day—and doubtless the right hon. Gentleman's attention was called to it—a suggestion emanated from Canada—the self-governing colony which has come forward so gallantly at a period of our national difficulties—that some Imperial tax should be instituted which should be in operation throughout the Empire as a contribution towards Imperial defence. That, I think, was an impost which my right hon. friend might not inappropriately have had recourse to in the present emergency in which the colonies and ourselves are placed, but, unfortunately, so far as this Budget is concerned it is crying over spilt milk to refer to it any more. I hope that my right hon. friend will realise that in order to maintain our financial system he must make up his mind to depart from the present narrow basis, which is absolutely inadequate to meet the growing requirements of the present day. Of course, Mr. Hume, Mr. Bright, and all the great economists of the day, acting in conjunction with other politicians, founded the doctrine of peace, retrenchment, and reform. They discouraged armaments, and they practically advocated the giving up of the policy of raising the strength of the Army. They, at any rate, had system in endeavouring to bring down expenditure to the narrow limits to which they thought our taxation ought to be reduced. But that is not the policy of

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my right hon. friend. He advocates an increase of expenditure, and very properly advocates it. All parties in this House are agreed that if you increase expenditure you ought, as a matter of duty, to consider whether you are prepared to supply the sinews of war whereby the sixty millions may be met. It is always argued that the existing fiscal system of this country is perfect, that it is against our best financial principles to entertain any suggestion which aims at increasing the limits and expanding the sources whence we derive our revenue. That is a very hopeless position. I shall be told that I have advocated nothing but the imposition of taxation. I have by no means exhausted the possible resources of taxation. There are foreign manufactured goods, taxation on which no one can say would interfere with the food of the people, and there are other items which one would have thought would occur to any Chancellor of the Exchequer who desired to extend the resources of taxation. While condemning most heartily the narrow limits within which the Budget is framed, I hope my right hon. friend will not take amiss my suggestion that in view of the admitted fact that our expenditure is continually and systematically increasing, and that all parties are united for the purpose not of curtailing, but of increasing that expenditure—[Opposition cries of "No, no!"]—some material alteration must be made in our financial system in order to meet the requirements of the country.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): Although we have a nice quiet House, apparently, with plenty of leisure, I do not think I need devote a great deal of time to arguing against my right hon. friend's proposal of a 5s. duty on corn.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I beg pardon; my right hon. friend quite misunderstood me. Five shillings would be a miserable sum. I advocated a sliding scale which, taking wheat at 40s., would keep it up to that price. Five shillings would be no good whatever.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is worse even than I supposed. I will not deal further with the subject. Perhaps when the present President of the Local Government Board occupies

the position of Chancellor of the Exchequer, the proposal may become a serious matter for this House and for the country, but not till then. Nor will I enlarge upon the heresy which, with all respect to the right hon. Gentleman, we all regard as a leading heresy in economical questions, and which has received a new recruit in my hon. friend the Member for Plymouth. Of all financial heresies I believe the greatest to be the idea that you ought to levy taxes upon the largest possible number of articles. That was what my right hon. friend called one of those "preconceived ideas." I would point out that the revenue of this country, which sixty years ago stood at about £50,000,000, has now reached £125,000,000, a result achieved by exactly the opposite policy. In those days almost everything possible was taxed. To-day, the fewest subjects possible are taxed. The history of that is that when you put taxes, however small, upon a commodity you make it dearer; you make the manufacture of it more difficult; the trade in it less profitable; you make it less accessible to the population; and the people who consume that commodity save less money and add less to the wealth of the country. That is the whole history of it.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Does that argument apply to the death duties?

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will deal with death duties presently. That is one of the few things which are as certain as that from which it derives its name. I really ought to ask the pardon of my hon. friend behind me for the exclamation which escaped me when he quoted Mr. Gladstone, and he said he shared in this heresy. Of all the preachers against this heresy my right hon. friend was the most earnest and consistent, and if the hon. Member would look at the speeches he made when the idea was suggested by Sir George Cornwall Lewis after the Crimean War, he would be satisfied as to the views of Mr. Gladstone on that subject. One of the great objects secured by the commercial Treaty with France in 1860 was the abolition of taxes on an infinite number of commodities. But I will not enlarge upon this point, because the Chancellor of the Exchequer is perfectly sound on the subject, and there is no process so unprofitable as that of

preaching to those who are already converted. My right hon. friend the Member for Thanet has said that this enormous increase of your expenditure may become a very serious question. Yes, indeed it may. It may drive you to tax commodities of every kind as they were taxed by Mr. Pitt in the great French War. Is that going to improve your financial position? Is that going to improve the condition of your people? What was the history of the people of this country from the conclusion of peace in 1815 when the great weight of taxation fell upon the masses of the people? From 1815 to 1840 the people of this country were in a miserable condition, owing to the intolerable weight of taxation. In 1840, before the income tax was imposed, about £50,000,000 was raised from taxation, of which £41,000,000 was raised upon that which was not property. That was the condition of the taxation of this country at that period. Even so far down as 1860 the proportion was only about £15,000,000 out of the £50,000,000 raised. With the splendid revenue you possess, are you going to reverse the principles upon which it has been built up? I imagine the House of Commons is not going to commit any folly of the kind. But, as I say, with the expenditure going on at its present rate, you may be driven to false finance, and then you will do infinite injury to the people of this country, and especially to the humbler classes, who are dependent for their existence on the wages of labour. But my principal reason for addressing the House to-night is that I desire at this stage—which is the proper occasion for reviewing the financial condition of the country generally—to place before the House what I think may be useful—a view of the distinction between the war Budget of to-day and what would have been a peace Budget. The figures are very few. At this time last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated the revenue at £111,000,000. He was not able a few days ago to give us the exact result, as the financial year has not yet concluded, but he has put it at £16,000,000, or £5,000,000 beyond his expectation. I do not wish to reproach the Chancellor of the Exchequer with that fact, but I do remember that on the occasion of his first Budget, five years ago, he reproached me with having left him a surplus of £5,000,000 which he said was a discredit, saying that it showed

bad calculation on my part, and that the duty of a Chancellor of the Exchequer was to make accurate prognostications of revenue and of expenditure.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: But I have stood in a white sheet myself.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have no more to say—a white sheet is always a becoming garment. The right hon. Gentleman has had the advantage of successive surpluses and of successive miscalculations, but I never complain of a miscalculation when it ends with a balance on the right side. It is quite true it is becoming impossible to calculate correctly the growing wealth of the country and the growing productiveness of the revenue. There is only one thing that exceeds it, and that is the incalculable growth of the expenditure. That is a fact, and I daresay when the Chancellor of the Exchequer gives us, as he has promised to do, the accurate figures of the revenue of this year, the amount will exceed the £116,000,000 at which he has put it. The estimated expenditure he took at nearly the same figure, with a very narrow margin—£111,000,000. The actual expenditure, as given by the right hon. Gentleman the other day, apart from the war expenditure, was £110,500,000. Therefore, his peace expenditure was half a million sterling below his estimate, with the consequence that, but for the war, he would have had a surplus of £5,500,000 according to that estimate, and I think I have his consent in saying that the surplus will really turn out to be considerably more than that sum—that is to say, the revenue will be more than £116,000,000. That was the very favourable position in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have found himself, and I would direct the attention of the House to what would have been to this country the result of such a condition of things. First of all as regards the National Debt, and then as regards taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has given us what is the increased Debt account with which he has to deal, showing in all an increase of £43,000,000. He has provided for that by the War Loan Bill £35,000,000, and Treasury bills already granted £8,000,000. But that is not the entire view of the case. You must remember that his surplus of

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£5,500,000—or, as it is likely to turn out, nearly £7,000,000—would have gone in a peace Budget by legislation to the reduction of the Debt under the head of the old Sinking Fund. But more than that, the right hon. Gentleman proposes to suspend the Terminable Annuities next year to the amount of £4,600,000, which in time of peace would have been appropriated to liquidation of debt. If you add the Terminable Annuities and the surplus together, and put the surplus at least at £6,000,000, you will find the sum which, if this had been a peace Budget, would have gone to the diminution of the Debt would have been at the very least £10,000,000, and probably £12,000,000. Therefore, upon this war Budget as compared with a peace Budget we stand upon the Debt account at least £53,000,000 to the bad, even assuming that we have provided for all the expenditure that will take place. I compare that with the situation in which the country was left at the close of the Crimean War. The figures show that at the present time we are £20,000,000 worse off than at the winding-up of the Crimean War, when, after a contest of two years, the sum added to the Debt was £32,000,000. That is a contrast which is deserving of the attention of the House. I pass now to the question of taxation; and how do I find we stand in a war as compared with a peace Budget? The Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated the revenue for next year at £116,900,000, or an increase of about £1,000,000 over the proceeds of this year. I do not know whether he proposes to diminish the amount by drafts made in anticipation of revenue, but I think he is generally the reverse of sanguine in his estimates, and might well calculate upon something more. I would add £1,500,000 to the expenditure of £110,500,000 last year, to meet the normal increase in expenditure, and taking these figures you would have upon a peace Budget an estimated revenue of, say, £117,000,000 and an estimated expenditure of £112,000,000, and that would have given you an estimated Budget surplus of £5,000,000, which would have been available for the reduction of taxation; and I can hardly believe that after five years of enormous prosperity and accumulation of surpluses the time would not have arrived when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in possession of a surplus of £5,000,000, would

not have addressed himself to the reduction of taxation at large. Five millions would have enabled the right hon. Gentleman to make a sensible decrease in the income tax, to diminish instead of increasing the tea duties, and, in fact, to give sensible relief to the taxation of the people. Instead of that you have increased taxation by upwards of £14,000,000, including the arrears of the increased income tax. I add to that, on the same principle which I applied to the terminable annuities, the £5,000,000 which might have come in diminution of taxation, and I say that in the place of a diminution of taxation of £5,000,000 you have an increased taxation of £14,000,000. So that on the head of taxation we are £19,000,000 worse off than we should have been on a peace Budget. That seems to me a very serious matter which deserves the attention of the House. I do not know that, in the face of this enormous expenditure, the Chancellor of the Exchequer could have done better. That I have already frankly admitted, and I do not think the right hon. Gentleman or his friends will ever say that I have been a captious critic of my successor. I have always rejoiced in the prosperity of his Revenue, and approved of the principles on which he has proceeded—with one exception, namely, when he struck £2,000,000 off the Sinking Fund. If he had not struck that £2,000,000 off the Sinking Fund, imitating the bad example of his predecessor, the First Lord of the Admiralty, he would now have had a far larger sum in the war chest with which to meet his expenditure. We have said what we had to say upon that subject, and I hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will stand again in a white sheet. There is one thing which I would like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I cannot find anywhere in the right hon. Gentleman's speech or in his tables any provision for the payment in the coming year of the interest upon the war loan.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I have included that in the £35,000,000.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Oh, in the £35,000,000! But, surely, when you raise a loan you ought not in the interest of sound finance to mix the payment of interest up in a hypothetical margin. Who ever heard of providing

the interest of the debt out of the loan by which that debt is created? What sort of finance is this? It ought to appear in your table as being in addition to the sum provided in the fixed charge, or at least as an item of the Consolidated Fund charge. It ought to be added to the charge for the National Debt, which you have reduced to £23,000,000, and which you have increased by this loan to £24,000,000, or something more. I turn now to the death duties, and I see sitting opposite to me the hon. Member for King's Lynn. There is a process known in the Church of Rome as canonisation, in which it is thought necessary, in order that all the defects and offences of the person it is proposed to canonise should be properly presented, that an officer known as the *avvocato del diavolo* should be present. The hon. Member fulfils that part to perfection in pointing out the defects, real or imaginary, in the death duties. The hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk is more limited in his opposition to the duties, because he only attacks them in the interest of one class—the landowners—while my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn objects to them universally on principle. I have always been willing to say very frankly that in dealing with so composite and large a question errors may have occurred, and no one would be more pleased than I should be to see them properly corrected. One objection to the duties taken by the hon. Member for King's Lynn was that they were difficult to calculate. All taxes are difficult to calculate, but this particular tax is remarkable, because it always exceeds the calculation made. At the time the death duties were passed in 1894, with the able assistance of my friend Sir Alfred Milner, the calculation I made was that the result of the new duties would not be less than an addition of £3,500,000 to the existing yield. In that year the death duties brought in £10,000,000, and our calculation was that the future yield would be £13,500,000, and might possibly go as high as £14,000,000. But £14,000,000 was the outside of the ultimate yield we expected, though it would not be available for several years; £3,500,000 was the figure at which we thought it safe to fix the final increase. But to-day the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimates the death duties at £17,500,000; and the result,

therefore, is that they have yielded in five years more than double the £3,500,000 at which we put the increase. To what has that been due? It has been due to the undiscovered and incalculable wealth of this country. People talk about millionaires. My hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn declared that under our legislation millionaires would be abolished and would no longer exist. No, Sir, we have not abolished millionaires by that legislation. What we did was to discover millionaires who never would have been found out but for our process of aggregation, because instead of treating a man possessed of a million as if we were only possessed of smaller sums in hundreds and thousands of pounds, we got the larger share from what was in fact a larger fortune. I was a little sorry to hear the tone in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of the author of the recent windfall under the death duties, because you ought not to look at a dead millionaire in the mouth. An hon. Member who sits for the City of London said the other day that capitalists were a necessary evil. That is not my financial view of them at all. I look upon them as an indispensable good. I rejoice in their existence and I am consoled in their death. No doubt, as in the case of all taxation so in the case of the death duties, there are a number of people who are always devising some method of evasion. The great preacher of evasion is the hon. Member for King's Lynn.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): That is not true. It is absolutely contrary to the fact. What I have preached is avoidance. I have always reprobated evasion. Avoidance, as I have defined it, is to do what is permitted by the Act to escape the duty. Evasion is to do what is prohibited by the Act.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will accept the explanation of the hon. Gentleman. When I was at the Bar there used to be a plea of the special pleaders called "a plea of confession and avoidance," and it is a plea of that character the hon. Gentleman has put forward. But I will accept the word "avoidance." If the hon. Member for King's Lynn preaches avoidance, the successful practitioner of avoidance is the hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk, who has

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fathered some amendments which may result in avoidance in favour of the class he represents. I cannot say that I wish him success in his efforts. The great difficulty in our way in this matter is the difficulty of dealing with settled property. All other property is quite simple; but settled property is surrounded by legal complication. One of the great difficulties we have had was in connection with the accidental omission of the clause in the Succession Duties Bill, which would have obviated the errors which have occurred. I am delighted to have an opportunity of offering my thanks to the hon. and learned Member for Haddington, who has publicly claimed the authorship of clause 2 of that Bill, and if it has not fulfilled all his expectations it must be remembered that this question of settlement is necessarily a difficult one. We endeavoured, by giving the immense advantage to settled property that it should only pay once upon all the lives included in the settlement, to meet a great part of the difficulty; and in order to compensate for that advantage, we thought it necessary to make an additional charge of one per cent. But I am now convinced that settled property at present enjoys a great and exceptional advantage to which it is not entitled—that the accumulation of lives and the one simple payment upon them is not compensated for by the one per cent. extra charge, and if there is to be any change in that matter it certainly ought not to be in favour of settled property, which already enjoys advantages to which it is not entitled. That, at all events, is the result of my experience. Therefore, I am glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes in the Finance Bill to place settled property on the same footing as other property in respect of the limit of twelve months before the decease of the party making the alteration. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was good enough to say that he acknowledged the advantages given in the Budget of 1894 to the landed interest as regards what was done in respect of Schedule A for their benefit. It is agreeable in these times to have even one of the many who were benefited return to give thanks, and the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer are not the less pleasant because they are unique. The new Estate Duty, as everyone must admit, has given a revenue which is of great use to the country at this crisis; and it has yielded twice as much as was

expected, in curious contrast to the succession duty of 1853, which tax did not yield one half what was expected, and never yielded the whole of what was calculated because at that time life interests introduced such a drawback that it was not until we dealt with the matter apart from that obstacle that we were able to put the duties on a footing that enabled us to derive a solid revenue from them. I know an objection is made to the tax on the ground that it is a tax upon capital. That might have been true at a time when, after the great war, there was a great deficiency of capital in this country. But there is no deficiency of capital in this country now, as is proved by the number of companies floated every day, and the amount of capital invested abroad for unremunerative purposes, and it is not a bad thing that out of the hundreds of millions sterling wasted in that manner, this country should derive a few millions in the form of taxation; and there is no reason whatever to think that the removal of that capital has any injurious effect upon labour in this country. One more remark upon the death duties. It is generally supposed that they weigh disproportionately heavily upon real property. But the amount levied upon real property is extremely small. If you look at the last return of the Inland Revenue you will find that the amount levied upon land is an insignificant portion of the £17,500,000 yielded by the death duties. The aggregate has been raised by £7,000,000, but a great deal of that has been diverted to the local taxation account as a subsidy for the rates. Then there is the beer duty. I find that among my friends the brewers the beer duty is now met with curses not loud but deep. In my time they were not only deep but very loud. In 1894, I remember, my hon. friend the Member for Wimbledon was most anxious to assure the House that it was not the duty on beer he objected to, but that what he was really solicitous about was the terrible effect the 6d. a barrel would have on the price of barley. We were told that we were ruining the agricultural interest. I do not remember exactly the figure which the present Chancellor of the Exchequer said that 6d. a barrel would inflict in the way of taxation upon a quarter of barley, but I know the agricultural interest rose in flocks to declare that 6d. on a barrel of beer would be

ruinous to barley—that it would amount to a tax of 2s. a quarter.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I never said so.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: No, I think you were too discreet. I did not enjoy a majority of one hundred and fifty. I could only boast of about fourteen. But I was overwhelmed with the wrath of the ruined agricultural interest, which, I was told, would be destroyed, especially in the eastern counties. I should like to know now at what exact figure hon. Gentlemen put the shilling on a barrel of beer converted into a tax upon barley in the form of malt? It ought, according to the traditions of that time, to represent a tax of 4s. on a quarter of barley. But a Unionist Government is now in power, and they have become more patient, and the ruined agricultural interest is, at all events, silent to-night. (Laughter.) I should be very glad to know—and I am speaking very seriously now—that the agricultural interest is in a less disastrous condition than it was in 1894.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN (Suffolk, Woodbridge): Very little.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Then what is going to happen to the barley? I will put it, then, that the more cheerful, the moderately cheerful, condition of the agricultural interest on the subject of the beer duties is extremely satisfactory. It is one of the advantages of the change of Governments in this country—and we hear a great deal about party Government now that you shunt a great deal of nonsense. The Protectionist Party, that has gone; the party of a tax on malt, that has gone now, and there are many other fallacies of different kinds that were got rid of in this manner. And, no doubt, it is very satisfactory that we do not hear to-night the sort of arguments against the beer duty that we have heard on previous occasions. There is no form of taxation that is satisfactory to Gentlemen opposite. The death duties were anathema; the beer duty was destructive of the agricultural interest, and the spirit duty—well, that was worse than all. But now, when similar conditions arise to those of 1894, and there is a call made for money for the defence of

the country as it was then, the Unionist party have dispelled their prejudices and they are willing to accede to that which they rejected before. On the whole, I do not greatly criticise the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. For myself, I think he might have raised a little more by taxation. I am not sure it has not yet to come. We are not at the end of our expenditure. I hope we are not going, in the future, to depend entirely upon borrowing. If you are not, then you are going to have more taxation. Everything tends, so far as I can see, in Gentlemen opposite—and I cannot answer for everybody on this side of the House—to encourage all those ideas, all those dispositions which are entirely in favour of increased expenditure. You may depend upon it, whatever you may say, whatever you may argue, and whatever may be the basis of your taxation, that this increase of expenditure, not by hundreds of thousands but by tens of millions, year after year, does, and must, mean increased taxation. I do not know whether we may be reduced to a taxation which is unsound in its principles, by extending it to all commodities. Most Gentlemen will remember the catalogue of Sydney Smith of the commodities that used to be taxed until it reached the nails in the coffin of the pauper. You may be reduced to that at the rate you are running into expenditure. I hope I may not see that day, but as long as I have the honour of a seat in this House, I shall continue to raise a warning voice against the inordinate increase of the expenditure of this country.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The right hon. Gentleman has drawn a true picture of what is in prospect. Undoubtedly, we have to look for a vast increase in our taxation, and I should have thought that that would be a reason why we should give some consideration to our system of taxation. The right hon. Gentleman is quite content that this country should go on levying a larger amount in customs duties than is levied by any other country in Europe. He is consoled, by the fact that the duties are few, for the other fact that they are outrageous. The Chancellor of the Exchequer agrees with him, but in doing so disagrees with the First Lord of the Admiralty and the First Lord of the Treasury, because both these right hon. Gentlemen have appealed for

the discovery of more objects of taxation. The right hon. Gentleman is in favour of piling up our taxation on its present objects, and that he regards as sound finance.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Hear, hear!

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I am glad there is one amongst the party opposite who agrees with the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman accuses myself and my hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk of being in partnership as devil's advocates. Our partnership is a limited one, but undoubtedly we are to some extent, though on different lines, devil's advocates in pointing out the defects—the numerous and awful defects—of the right hon. Gentleman's Act. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman expects at some future time to be canonised for that Act.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It is canonised.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Then if it is canonised it ought to be under the title of the "Impenitent Thief." That is the only appropriate name I can think of. The right hon. Gentleman talks about millionaires. He is never tired of boasting about his millionaires, but they are artificial millionaires, whose millions do not exist and do not pass. The right hon. Gentleman knows as well as I do that he has built up an enormous fabric of wealth which does not exist except for the purposes of the Act, a consecrated phrase which indicates a thing which does not exist. These millionaires, though artificial in their millions, are very real in their deaths, and the death duties themselves are very real, but when the right hon. Gentleman takes credit for increasing the number of millionaires, I wish to point out that they are merely artificial. Now as to evasion, the right hon. Gentleman has "evasion" on the brain, and I sometimes think the Chancellor of the Exchequer has caught it from him. They are always talking of evading the death duties. Why, if you listen to these right hon. Gentlemen, a man evades the death duties by not dying. I shall next expect to hear that the right hon. Gentleman proposes for millionaires the methods known to the Italian poisoners in order that he may the more speedily come into

Sir William Harcourt.

his own. The right hon. Gentleman told us, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the clause he proposes tells us, that when a man gets rid of his money in his life time and does not leave it to be taxed at his death, that is evasion.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH : That is not my clause.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES : I am going to attempt to show that it is. First of all let me remark that there is here no evasion. When I asked a modest question the other day the right hon. Gentleman, by the mouth of his acolyte the Secretary to the Treasury, replied that this duty was no new duty at all, but was in order to stop the evasion of the existing duty.* The right hon. Gentleman talks of death being certain ; but there is nothing so uncertain as death. It sometimes comes to the wrong man and at the wrong time ; to the son first, to the father next, and to the grandfather last ; and that constantly upsets the operation of the death duties. The whole argument on the evasion of the Act is fallacious. If a man divests himself of his property during his life, if he gives it away or throws it away, there is no evasion of the Act. There may be avoidance, and Mr. Justice Chitty has expressed a very clear opinion on that point. At a time when the death duties have reached an amount such as the wildest dreams and imaginations never expected, it is the height of cruelty and wantonness to screw up the Act, to close the door which was left open by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and to impose an entirely new duty. What does the right hon. Gentleman propose to do ? Clause 10 says that—

“In the case of every person dying after the 31st March, 1900, property, whether real or personal, in which the deceased person or any other person had an estate or interest limited to cease on the death of the deceased shall, for the purpose of the Finance Act, 1894, and the Acts amending that Act, be deemed to pass on the death of the deceased, notwithstanding that that estate or interest has been surrendered, assured, or otherwise disposed of, whether for value or not, to or for the benefit of any person entitled to an estate or interest in remainder or reversion in such property, unless that surrender, assurance, or disposition was *bona fide* made twelve months before the death of the deceased, and *bona fide* possession and enjoyment of the property was assumed thereunder, immediately upon the surrender, assurance, or disposition, and thence forward

retained to the entire exclusion of the person making the same, and of any benefit to him by contract or otherwise.”

Well, I venture to say, as the Court has decided, that this is a tax upon property which does not pass, and has not existed to pass. I think I have shown that this is an entirely new duty, a duty which the Courts have decided was not imposed by the Act of 1894.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT : It was imposed on all unsettled property.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES : That is so. It was thought to be imposed ; it was perhaps intended to be imposed by the hon. Member who drew this remarkable clause—a clause which I remember the right hon. Gentleman justified by explaining that if the clause had been intelligible the House of Commons would never have been expected to pass it. I say this is a new death duty, and when I remember the fervour with which the right hon. Gentleman, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, pleaded for the interest of property, I am astonished that he should dare to impose in the year of the largest returns from death duties, a death duty of his own. I recognise that Clause 12 is unquestionably desirable to get rid of a small defect in the principal Act, but in regard to Clause 11 the case is quite different. As the right hon. Gentleman knows, and as everybody who has studied the Act knows, the great central weakness of the Act was graduation founded on a scaffolding of aggregation. The effect of graduation is sometimes exceedingly remarkable. A very small amount added to or diminished from the aggregate may make an enormous difference in the rate of duty. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed three separate aggregations, the Attorney General said he was quite right ; that the only practical and sensible method of dealing with the matter was to require that property passing by settlement should be aggregated separately. I applauded him then. I admired him then as I do now, but more than I do now, because so far as I can gather, he is going to make himself an accomplice in what he formerly denounced. There is only one sound principle in regard to this aggregation, and I propose to apply that principle by a small Amendment which will make a very slight difference in the amount of duty received ; and that is

* 9th March, 1900. See page 485 of this Volume.

that you should only aggregate that which passes. The right hon. Gentleman proposes to bring in aggregation that which is not in it. The end of the Clause is so remarkable that I perceive he is acting here contrary to the settled principles of taxation—he proposes to deal with what he conceives to be hard cases. There is this most extraordinary proviso at the end of Clause 11 :—

“Where settled property passes, or is deemed to pass, on the death of a person dying after the passing of this Act, under a disposition made by a person dying before the commencement of part I of the Finance Act, 1894, and such property would if the disponent had died after the commencement of the said part, have been liable to estate duty upon his death, the aggregation of such property with other property passing upon the first-mentioned death, shall not operate to enhance the rate of duty payable either upon the settled property or upon any other property so passing by more than one-half per cent. in excess of the rate at which duty would have been payable if such settled property had been treated as an estate by itself.”

What is that but ousting the aggregation and crippling the graduation? I shall wait with great interest the explanation the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be able to afford us as to the genesis of this clause. Under the present system the right hon. Gentleman is levying an enormous tax on a few hands. Some people will no doubt approve of a system whereby those who have the largest incomes pay twice as much Income Tax as there is any need for them to pay if the burden were properly distributed. The total income of this country now is estimated by the most capable of statisticians, Sir Robert Giffen, at 1,600 millions. Now an Income Tax of 1s. in the £1 would on that sum yield eighty millions. The total income of those having incomes over £160 would be, this year, 800 millions; three years ago it would have been only 729 millions. Well, 1s. Income Tax on 800 millions would give forty millions; but, as a matter of fact, instead of taxing 800 millions you only tax 500 millions, and that at 1s. Income Tax gives you twenty-five millions. The fact is that through the exemptions and abatements, and the escape of the lower class, 1s. Income Tax is paid instead of 7½d., if it were more equally levied. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has this year increased the direct taxation somewhat more in proportion to the indirect; but if we are going

Mr. Gibson Bowles.

to rely on direct taxation the time has come when we will have to recast the system and extend it to those who at present pay little or nothing. It would be a most excellent thing in the public interest, for it would bring home to those who at present do not pay an interest in public affairs through their pockets. Without presuming to say by what exact method the change should be made, I think it would behove the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider whether he is to go on exempting an enormous amount of income, or consider whether it is politic to exempt or even partially to exempt incomes above £160 and below £700. I regret that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should impose a new death duty and rest upon the aggregation clause; but in regard to the rest of the Budget I join in the chorus of approval in the circumstances that have taken place. The time, however, must come when we should recast our system of taxation; but no doubt this is scarcely a very convenient time to do so, although by piling up the taxes upon the present very small basis the inequality has been added to. A time of urgency is not a time to discuss new methods of taxation; and except as regards the points I have alluded to I think the right hon. Gentleman's Budget a very good one.

*Mr. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): I wish to correct a misapprehension which appears to be in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman who sits below me and of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. I was not in the House when the hon. Gentleman alluded to the matter, but I believe he referred to me as having claimed the credit of being responsible for the life estate part of Clause 3 of the Finance Act, 1894. I had nothing to do with the life estate clause. As regards the “allusive” clause the right hon. Gentleman who sits below me says I claim the credit for the form of that clause. No, the credit of that clause belongs to the right hon. Gentleman himself. What I did say in the course of a lecture which I gave some time ago to a legal society on the subject of the death duties was, that the form of legislation by reference in this clause was suggested by Sir Alfred Milner and myself to the right hon. Gentleman, and that he had adopted it. That had nothing to do with the life estates clause. The “allusive” clause,

as it was called, combined amendments in the Finance Acts of the two Parliaments of 1889 and 1881, and Sir Alfred Milner and myself suggested that the shortest and most concise way of incorporating existing legislation was by reference. That is the plan which was followed, and I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having adopted a plan of which I think he need not now be ashamed.

*CAPTAIN PRETYMAN said that an important point referred to, not for the first time, was the largely increased expenditure of the country. Hon. Members prided themselves, and he thought justly—because that was the attitude taken up by the present and the late Chancellor of the Exchequer—on the present principle of taxation in this country. At the same time, they expressed a fear that this increased expenditure might drive the country back into the old methods. Very possibly it was the very success of the present taxation, and the ease with which it was collected, that to some extent caused the present excessive expenditure. In his opinion, any small return to the old system of taxation would at once bring up short the expenditure. The question we had to ask ourselves was not so much whether the expenditure was large as whether we got value for our money. In his opinion, the money spent on education was well spent, and even more might be spent to greater advantage. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the expenditure on the Army and Navy as “spasmodic,” but he did not think that was a term which could be fairly applied to it, because there had been a continuity of policy, the results of which had been voted satisfactory. The money which had been voted for the Army and Navy during the last ten years had been the truest economy in the best sense of the word, and had resulted in a truer gain than other expenditure. Only imagine the position we should have found ourselves in six months ago, if that expenditure had not taken place. With regard to the suggestion that more objects of taxation should be found, he thought there appeared to be some confusion of terms, because it was not the commodity, but the individual who paid the taxation, and he did not see what difference it made to the individual whether he paid £5 a year on

tea, or the same amount on sugar. At the present time, the elasticity of our revenue was shown by the fact that by very small impositions we were able to increase our revenue by many millions; but he argued that a multiplicity of extra subjects taxed was not necessary. If one founded a house, one did not build it on a bed of shingle, but on a few substantial blocks, and, the same principle applied to taxation, in the present case a multiplicity of taxable subjects would be a bed of shingle. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, the country must be gratified by the fact that we could raise the enormous expenditure that was necessary without making any radical change in our system of taxation. As to the remarks with respect to the comparatively large increase in the tax on tea, compared with that on wine and beer, he pointed out that it was because the tea tax had been reduced so largely in recent years. It was an abnormal tax which we would like to see reduced again as soon as possible, but that remark did not apply to wine and beer; but at the same time there was a limit to taxation, even on such subjects as wine and beer. He was glad to hear that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had provisionally withdrawn the clause as to the extra stamp duties. He had heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer say that the business classes would stand being taxed, but that they would not stand being worried, and he was convinced that the collecting of the £150,000, which it was estimated the new stamp duties would have realised, would have caused more worry than the sum expected to be realised was worth. There had been some considerable discussion with regard to the death duties, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire had accused him of taking an interest in the death duties only so far as they affected landed interests. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman had made that accusation, as he now desired to support the proposed clause imposing estate duty on settled property where the life interest had not been made over more than twelve months before death. He wanted to see an equality of treatment and a twelve-months rule, so applying to property which had been transferred or settled more or less than twelve months before death. There was injustice in that matter, of which we had a right to

complain, and he asked for a readjustment in connection with this matter, which would apply to the various disputes and difficulties which now arose. The clause dealing with the matter was the result of the labours of the Departmental Committee, which was appointed to deal with the question, and of which he was a member. He hoped that the House would not regard clause 12 as an increase of the duties, but as a remedy for undue leniency on the one hand, and undue hardship on the other. We had been told that the Act was unduly lenient on landed property. The Member for King's Lynn said so, but one of the difficulties in following him was to know what his real principles were. As to the Member for West Monmouth, he entirely differed from him as to the incidence of the taxation of securities and landed property. These, he must admit, must be differently dealt with. The value of land had gone down and remained at its lowest ebb, but the country was small and the population was large, and therefore it was a great privilege to own a considerable area of land, and that privilege must be paid for. A man with £100,000 worth of securities could sell £10,000 worth, and the value of the remainder would not be affected, but the sale of a quantity of land might deteriorate the remainder of an estate. He maintained that the burden of local taxation which fell on real property was largely in excess of what it used to be. A Royal Commission on the subject was sitting at present, and its decision was anxiously awaited, and he deprecated increasing taxation on realty until they had its report. He compared the position of a man who had a farm of 300 acres, and who had a difficulty in making a living and keeping it properly equipped, and that of a man who had £10,000 a year from foreign securities, and who was not the employer of any labour beyond domestic servants. Their relative positions with regard to taxation were very unfair. The right hon. Gentleman opposite did not appear to believe in the reality of agricultural distress.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I did not allude to agricultural distress particularly. I only said that I have observed that the agricultural Members appear to object less to the tax now to be put on beer than they did to the 6d. which I proposed a few years ago.

Capt. Pretyman.

*CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: The agricultural interest was not behindhand in paying what was necessary at this exceptional time, and the right hon. Gentleman's tax was not proposed in order to pay for a war. It was because there was a general feeling that all classes should help to provide the money now required that the agricultural interest did not object to the new tax on beer, but he was afraid that the brewers, in order to recoup themselves, would use less barley, and that the farmers would suffer in consequence. He hoped, when all other industries were prospering, that agriculture would revive, and, in regard to this Budget, they all wished to express their willingness to bear any share of the burden that was put upon all. The Budget, as a whole, appeared to him to show that the country was in a position to bear the heavy taxation in a manner which would earn us the respect and appreciation of our well-wishers; but, perhaps, what was even more desirable, the respect of those who did not wish to see it as prosperous as we all wished to see it.

*MR. ALLHUSEN (Salisbury): The Chancellor of the Exchequer assured us that, at whatever cost, this war was to be brought to a successful termination. We have to decide how that particular cost has to be borne, how much to be raised by taxation and how much by loan; in other words, how much is to be paid by ourselves and how much by posterity. By an intelligent anticipation of events the Chancellor of the Exchequer has arranged that the Boer Republics should pay something like two-thirds of the cost of this war when they become British colonies. They are to be saddled with a debt of £43,000,000. So much the better for us—but we have to wait until they are additions to the Empire—assuming that they will be added to the Empire before the end of the year. I think it will be better to wait until we have had time to administer them, until we see what is wanted for their own purposes, and how much is available as interest and sinking fund for this £43,000,000. At any rate, we cannot look upon this £43,000,000 as repaid to us until we have had some experience of the cost of administration of the Boer territories. We have further to consider what sums will have to be paid by these territories as compensation to the loyal colonists of Cape Colony and Natal.

That will undoubtedly amount to a considerable figure, which will lessen the power of those territories to bear a debt of £43,000,000. Therefore, with regard to the cost of this war, £43,000,000 of it is a debt which may or may not be repaid to us, and we are only being called upon to pay the difference of £12,500,000. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer has let the present taxpayer off somewhat too easily. I know that that is not a very popular view, but still I cannot help feeling, having regard to the extraordinary wealth of this country, and having regard to the fact that the vast majority of persons in this country are in favour of this war, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have increased the proportion to be raised by taxation, and lessened the amount to be borrowed. What is the position as compared with the last time we were engaged in a great war? It is assumed that this war will be over by October, and it is estimated that it will have cost £60,000,000, or a little over. Of that sum £12,500,000 is to be raised by increased taxation, and £43,000,000 by loan. During the Crimean War £29,000,000 was raised by increased taxation and only £37,500,000 by loan, so that this war is going to cost the taxpayer to-day less than half what was the yearly cost to the taxpayer at the time of the Crimean War. It may be said that the situation is different from what it was at the time of the Crimean War, as there was then no prospect of an indemnity. In regard to this war, I think the prospect that the Boer Republics will be able to pay an indemnity has somewhat influenced the soundness of the financial principles of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I venture to say that if we were at war with any country in Europe, and estimating what that war would cost in one year, there would be a very much larger sum raised by increased taxation, and a very much smaller sum by loan. Of course, it is said in regard to this war that posterity will very largely benefit by it, and that that is not an argument which can be used in regard to a war with a European Power. I do not think that argument will bear close examination in the present case. It appears to me that we are fighting to-day to defend the rights and interests of our own British subjects and the honour of the British

Empire. In going to war with the Boer Republics, we are not considering posterity at all in the matter. We are fighting to maintain the supremacy of the British Empire of to-day, and if in the process of defending that supremacy we do something for the benefit of posterity, so much the better for posterity, but I cannot see that that is a reason why we should not take upon ourselves the burden of the war, which is ours, and ours only. Apart from this question of the interest of posterity in this war, there is surely another good reason why a larger sum should be raised by increased taxation, and that is that it is advisable that the expense of war should be brought home to every taxpayer in the country, and I am afraid this Budget, which has been hailed with approval throughout the country, will not accomplish that purpose. They will be apt to forget that we may be in a year or two engaged in a war which will cost a very great deal more, and will lessen their idea of their own responsibility in regard to the persons they return to this House. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will tell us that all classes are to pay the increased taxation he has placed on the country. I venture to think that that increased taxation will be paid by three classes—the income-tax payer, the beer and spirit merchants, and the tea drinker. The income tax has always been considered a war tax. Whatever may be the origin of the income tax, I do not imagine any Chancellor of the Exchequer or any House of Commons would be able to abolish the income tax in time of peace, although there is no doubt it might be somewhat considerably reduced. As the payer of this tax has always looked upon it as a war tax, he is always ready when a war comes to have the tax increased to pay some of the cost of the war. He is certainly doing so to a large extent in this case, and he is paying out of the increased taxation to be raised something like two-thirds. Further, as as there were in the time of the Crimean War no graduated death duties, he is contributing both in time of peace and in time of war a very much larger sum in proportion than he used to. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer might well have raised the tax to 1s. 2d., making £12,000,000 extra revenue, and I do not think the income-tax payer would have grumbled to any extent. In regard to indirect taxation, I wonder what has become of the financial

courage of the right hon. Gentleman. Hardly any of this indirect taxation will reach the consumers of dutiable articles, except the consumers of tea. The tax on beer and spirits will have to be paid almost entirely by the brewers and the shareholders in breweries, and to a small extent by the retailers. If they are going to recover that from the consumers they can only do it in one way, and that is by giving an inferior article for the same price they used to pay for the superior article. I am sure the indirect taxation which results in that is not taxation which ought to recommend itself to any Chancellor of the Exchequer. With regard to tobacco, tobacco is now to be placed in nearly the same position as in 1898, before the tax was reduced. The result is that the consumer of tobacco at a time of national crisis will be able to smoke his pipe at the same price as in 1898 in a time of peace.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton): The price has been increased.

*MR. ALLHUSEN: Tobacco merchants absorbed nearly the whole of the reduction given two years ago, and, having absorbed that, it will be very shabby on their part if they now increase the price to the consumer. The tobacco trade is certainly a sufficiently lucrative one to pay something towards the extra expenses of the country in time of war. When I come to tea, there is no doubt the consumer will have to pay. Every old woman as she watches her dish of tea stewing on the hob will have the satisfaction of knowing she is paying towards the cost of the war, and I am rather sorry for those persons who, like the hon. Baronet, the Member for Cockermouth, are teetotalers, because it seems to me they will be in the position of having to pay more for this war of which they do not approve, than the income-tax payer who is not a teetotaler, but a moderate consumer of beer or spirits, and who cordially approves of this war. I think the right hon. Gentleman might have raised by indirect taxation a sum altogether of £12,000,000 over and above the amount raised in time of peace. We should then have been able to pay £24,000,000 towards the cost of this war, a sum which represents a very much fairer proportion of the cost that should fall upon us than the paltry sum the Chancellor of the Exchequer has called

Mr. Allhusen.

upon the country to pay. We should have thrown upon the taxpayer a sum which would have brought home to him his financial responsibility, and which would have made him aware that it is impossible to go to war without having to suffer something for it. Under the present Budget there will be a very large number of taxpayers who will pay practically nothing at all, and that is not at all a situation to be desired. I think it should be arranged that in times of war all classes should be called upon to pay equally towards the cost of that war, and the increased taxation should be so arranged that the burden does not fall upon a somewhat limited number. By such a course we should raise a much larger sum, and afford a more edifying spectacle to foreign nations than is shown them by persons who are helping to pay for this war by subscribing to a good investment and pocketing a substantial premium.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): The present year is so momentous an epoch in the history of British finance that I feel it requires exceptional courage to take part in this debate, and this is particularly the case for a new Member. I am conscious that in trespassing on the time of the House in the present circumstances I shall have to appeal in a peculiar degree to that generosity with which those who speak in these precincts for the first time are always treated. But the gravity and tension of the financial situation, the heavy difference which exists between the necessary expenditure of the year and the highest level the revenue can be expected to reach are, I hope, circumstances of justification for me, because I am one of the few Members of this House whose life has been passed among deficits, and whose financial experience consists largely in endeavouring to bring revenue up to the level of expenditure. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the other night a considerable deficit, the word rang in my ear with a familiar sound, and I felt myself on well-known and oft-trodden ground. Turning to the proposals contained in the Budget, I hope the universal approval with which they have been met will not cause the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to view with disfavour the tribute of sincere admiration which I desire to offer. He deserves all

the praise he has received for his doctrine, and even more than he has received for his practice. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth says the sound financial principles of the Chancellor of the Exchequer have been clipped and nipped in practice in order to fall in with the views of those who sit on this side of the House, about whose capacity for sound finance he is rather sceptical. I venture to think that the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer are on all fours with his doctrine, and that in the Budget he has carried his principles to their fullest legitimate conclusion. Mr. Gladstone was in the habit of saying that in framing schemes of taxation you must be bold, intelligible, and decisive. I venture to claim for the present scheme the merit of all three qualities. The proposals are certainly bold, for they comprehend the largest increase of taxation ever proposed to this House. In the year of the Crimean War—the year with which the right hon. Gentleman opposite contrasts the present so unfavourably—the total increase was only £10,000,000, while in the other great war period, at the end of the last century, it required the cumulative effect of four Budgets to increase the taxation of the country by the amount which is now being imposed by one Budget. Even allowing for all the vast increase of wealth which has taken place, the mere statement of those figures is sufficient to absolve the proposals from the charge of being either timorous or commonplace. They are certainly intelligible. On all sides it has been admitted that straightforwardness and an absence of juggling are amongst their main characteristics. They are essentially honest and straightforward, and the reception they have been accorded would not be given to any complicated or obscure scheme. In regard to the third point I think they are decisive. They show in the clearest possible way that the Government and the country are determined to submit to the necessary sacrifices in order to carry this war to a final conclusion, and that they will not allow the credit of the country to be impaired or the financial administration to be troubled by any hesitation in imposing the necessary taxation. In this connection I venture to express the opinion that justice has hardly been done to the proposals by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth-

shire. He criticised the timidity of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, saying that out of a total war expenditure of £60,000,000, only £12,000,000 were to be provided by current taxation, and that nearly £50,000,000 would be added to the indebtedness of the country. He stated that this policy was below the standard set at the time of the Crimean War. I beg to dissent from that view. What are the figures? The right hon. Gentleman himself said that out of the total expenditure of £60,000,000, £30,000,000 could and should be recovered from the Transvaal or from Transvaal revenue; and that view has been favoured by, I think, every speaker in this debate.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I should like to say that I am very sceptical about it, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not get it from the Transvaal he will have to pay it himself.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT: We all hope it will be paid. But is it quite logical or consistent of the right hon. Gentleman first of all to state the right of this country to the repayment, and then to leave the probability or the possibility of that repayment altogether out of account when it somewhat embarrasses his argument? How does this payment for taxation of £12,000,000, or in reality of £14,000,000 towards the presumed debt of £30,000,000, compare with the practice of former times? It compares favourably. In the time of the Crimean War taxation was kept on for some considerable period after the cessation of hostilities, and the net result was that approximately 50 per cent. or 55 per cent. of the war expenditure was met from taxation, the remaining 45 or 50 per cent. being left to swell the indebtedness of the country. Comparing it with the war at the beginning of the century the case is even more favourable, because out of the expenditure on the war only 27 per cent. was paid from taxation. Under the present proposals, the total of our indebtedness, after deducting the repayment from the Transvaal, will be paid off in two years if the taxation is maintained. How long is the war taxation to be kept up? I trust that the precedent of the Crimean War will be followed. I feel strongly that it is the duty of those responsible for the finance of the country to maintain

either the whole, or, at any rate, a part of the war taxation until such time as the indebtedness of the country has returned to the point at which it stood at the beginning of the war in October, 1899. This may be considered to be a severe standard, but the prosperity of the country is such that it can stand the sacrifice. I am convinced that that policy if followed will do more to enhance and strengthen the reputation of the finance of this country than any other measure we can take. The world will see in our action in this colonial war the spirit with which we should meet the crisis if we are involved in a still greater complication. I do not ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give any pledge upon this subject, but I trust he will not give a pledge in the contrary sense, regarding the abolition of the taxation now being imposed. Pledges of that kind at the time of the Crimean War gave rise to considerable difficulty. I now turn to the question of broadening the basis of taxation which has been treated by several speakers. It appears to me that the advocates of this course may be divided, roughly, into two classes, namely, those who desire to replace a given amount of direct taxation by an equal amount of indirect taxation, and those who, whilst maintaining the aggregate amount of indirect taxation, desire to replace a certain number of high duties which are now levied on a small number of articles by a lower duty levied on a larger number of articles. I shall not enter into a discussion of the very abstract and theoretical question of direct and indirect taxation, but I will say in passing that those who contend that the proportion of increase in the case of direct taxation has been excessive have certainly a strong *prima facie* case. Comparing the Estimates for the present year with the Accounts of 1885 what do we see? Direct taxation has increased by about 80 per cent. and indirect taxation by about 23 per cent. only; and there is the additional aggravating circumstance that the indirect taxes have increased principally owing to commercial development, and not to enhanced duties, while direct taxes have mainly increased on account of the larger imposition of duties. But the whole subject of direct and indirect taxation is complex, and I shall not venture to trouble the House with any further remarks respecting it. Besides which,

Sir Edgar Vincent,

the rival merits of the two forms of taxation are not really the critical and essential point of the present discussion. That point is the contention that our present system of levying high duties on a small number of articles is dangerous, and that it hampers us gravely when in time of emergency an increase of taxation is required. I do not agree with that view. It appears to me that it has been arrived at rather by those who have been misled by the sound of words and phrases. The proposal to "broaden the basis of taxation" sounds wise and statesmanlike, but it is forgotten that it is practically equivalent to narrowing and reducing the number of articles on the free list. Converted into those terms it does not sound so well. The whole effort of the legislation of the last half-century has been in reality not to broaden the basis of taxation, but to restrict the sphere of the operations of the Customs House official, and undoubtedly that policy has played a large part in promoting our commercial supremacy. Experience has shown that high duties on a small number of articles impede commerce less, cost less to collect, and are probably—though this is a matter of opinion—less liable to evasion and fraud than lower duties levied over a wider area. In the old times, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite has said, everything was taxed, and I think he gave the quotation from the ribbons of the bride to the brass nails of the coffin. There were then 1,100 articles taxed; now, the list of articles in which commerce is not free can be written on a half-sheet of note-paper. Moreover, this great reform, this marvellous freeing of commerce, has been conducted with such skill that it has caused no diminution of the customs revenue. Then there is the argument that by having high duties on a small number of articles you deprive yourself of the emergency reserve which consists in increasing low duties on a large number of articles. I do not deny that there is considerable force in this argument, but it would carry conviction only if it could be shown that our present rates of duty were such as to render an increase in time of war or in some other such time unduly irksome or dangerous. It is demonstrable—so far as any opinion of the kind can be demonstrable—that our present duties are not at danger point, and, if it was desirable to

do so, I believe, speaking purely from a fiscal point of view, that it would be possible to increase the majority of them considerably without undue danger of giving rise to contraband. In support of this view I would mention the interesting fact that prosecutions by the Customs have diminished in the most remarkable degree during the last twenty, and still more during the last ten, years. Since 1890 the number of prosecutions for fraud in connection with the Customs has diminished by fully 50 per cent., and in the more important matter of what I may call the non-summary cases the fall is even greater, as they have fallen from 56 and 60 in 1889 and 1890 to an average of ten during the last few years. The line separating a tax which can be applied from a tax which will give rise to fraud is clearly not determinable in a permanent fashion; it depends upon a number of varying factors, such as the efficiency of the revenue service, and, still more, I believe, on the moral progress of the community. The proposal to impose taxation during peace time on a larger number of articles in order to create a reserve—a frame-work for war taxation—appears to me to be applying the principles of war organisation to the peaceful administration of the revenue, and I do not think they meet the case. This policy, if adopted, could only lead to this—that you would hamper trade unnecessarily, you would appoint unnecessary customs and excise officials, and you would, if I may say so, create a skeleton battalion of tax collectors. I shall not discuss the question of whether our present indirect taxes fall unduly on any given class of the community, because I do not think it is contended that the system is narrow in the sense of being unfair, but only in the sense of falling upon a small number of articles. But if those articles are consumed by the entire community there would be no gain from the point of view of justice by the change proposed, and there would be, as I have endeavoured to show, considerable administrative disadvantage and impeding of commerce. I fear I have already detained the House too long—[“No, no!”]—but I would venture to conclude by expressing the hope that at some not distant period the House will undertake an examination of the financial situation of the country with a special re-

gard to the constant and rapid increase of expenditure. I know this is an unpopular and an unfashionable subject, but I believe that the wise and sober traditions of English finance can be maintained only by a strict and vigilant regard for economy. The forces acting in the direction of expenditure are now strong. I confess I view with some alarm the alliance against the Treasury which has been formed by various persons of great influence and power. We hear voices which differ on almost every subject agreeing in the desire to diminish financial control. I fancy that when that occurs there is some peril for the Exchequer, but I hope the Chancellor will not be dismayed by the unusual combination brought against him, and that he will preserve his natural ferocity unimpaired. The right hon. Gentleman, however, with all his great qualities, is powerless to stem the tide unless he is supported by a steady body of opinion in this House. May the day be far distant when the policy of moderation in public expenditure, the duty of sleepless vigilance against profusion, will lack advocates of sufficient courage to stand up for what is now a neglected cause. When peace is obtained—permanent peace based upon complete victory—I trust the enormous expenditure, inevitable in time of war, will give place to a period of careful revision. The splendid liberality with which the country and the House have voted unprecedented supplies appears to entail upon the Government the grave responsibility of so ordering the administration that there shall be neither waste, nor extravagance, nor excess. If this duty is performed rigorously and unflinchingly I am confident that the finance of England will long remain what it has now been for more than two centuries—the standard and model for all countries of the civilised world.

MR. BILLSON (Halifax): I do not propose to follow the various points raised by previous speakers, but I rise for the purpose of drawing attention to two or three points in the Bill. The speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Woodbridge has been listened to with great attention, and he has raised one or two very interesting points. He brought up again the old point mentioned so often at the passing of the Finance Bill in regard to the great hardship inflicted

upon the landed interest. But the hon. and gallant Member seems to find a difficulty in applying to land-owners the same principle which applies to any other class of property. He says that in the case of an estate worth £100,000 it is difficult to cut off £10,000 to pay the estate duty. But he should remember that there are other people who own property which it is very difficult to divide. What about the owner of a steamship worth £100,000? He has to pay the £10,000 duty, and there is no way of cutting that off a steamship. Probably this person who owns a steamship will have a considerable amount of money, and a man with a landed estate generally has a good deal of property beside his estate. The hon. and gallant Member put the question to my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouth—why do agriculturists look more cheerful now than they did in 1894? Agriculturists are more cheerful now because they have received £2,000,000 in doles, which the present Government have given to them. But when hon. Members opposite talk about agriculturists they always mean landlords, and not the tenant farmers or the agricultural labourers. Under the circumstances it would not be grateful if they did not look to the Government with gratitude for the favours of the past, and they are looking for more favours to come in the future. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I think, is the only gentleman on the opposite side of the House who has acknowledged properly the boon which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth gave to the landed interest in the Budget of 1894, when he allowed them 15 per cent. off for repairs. I must say that I have some doubts about the equitable working of that allowance. I do not say that it has not worked well in respect to agricultural land, but it works unfairly in respect of the land in towns, where the site value of the property is much larger than the building value. In the City of London the site value of land is 80 per cent. of the total value, and this 15 per cent. for repairs is charged upon the site value and the structure in a lump. Therefore, the site value, which requires no repairs, gets 15 per cent. allowed to the extent of four-fifths of the total value. All that excess of deduction made from the site value, means that there is that much site value which bears no taxation.

Mr. Billson.

The site value of London has been estimated at £3,923,000 a year, and the building value £1,500,000. The deduction from these two figures means £927,300, whereas if the deduction for repairs was made from buildings alone it would only be £250,000. In other words the sites are assessed at £670,000 a year too little in the City of London. If this injustice were remedied there would be a considerable gain to the Exchequer at the cost of those who might fairly be taxed. In connection with the property tax under Schedule A, the law lays down that land should be charged according to what it produces, and not according to its real value. When this property tax was first put in force about fifty years ago, the conditions were somewhat different, and there is now in all our large towns a great deal of land that escapes taxation which ought to bear taxation. Large quantities of land lie idle and produce nothing, and consequently such land does not come within the purview of this taxation. And why not? Such land is increasing in value every year, and it is just as legitimate to tax it as if the owner derived an income from it, and I see no reason why the owner should not be charged upon the actual value instead of upon the proceeds from the land. Let me give an illustration. I know a case where a man owns twenty acres of land in the midst of streets in a town, and that land is lying practically idle. It produces practically nothing and certainly not more than £2 or £3 a year. A few weeks ago a builder offered the owner £400 a year as ground rent for the land, but he refused it. This land is actually increasing in value year by year, and the owner is only paying 10s. or 12s. per annum upon it, whereas if it were taxed at its real value it would produce a considerable sum. I do not think there is an hon. Member of this House who does not know of dozens of cases of this sort, and there are large numbers of cases where plots of land are lying idle which it would be easy to tax. The owners of such land know that the work of the people in the immediate vicinity will increase the value of their land, and so they keep it idle and you do not tax it, but the moment they begin to use it you put a tax upon it, and therefore there is a premium upon keeping the land idle. Everybody must be convinced that the difficulty of getting land is the real

problem at the root of the housing question, just as the taxing of land is at the root of the land question. I will not go into the general question of taxation of ground values, for I am basing my case purely upon the taxes now levied, and which under this Bill you will continue to levy. Taking the taxes now levied I say that you are not dealing quite fairly between the owner of one piece of land and another, because you put a tax upon the man who uses his land, and you do not tax the man who lets his land lie idle, and who thus prevents people from living upon it. There is one other question I want the Chancellor of the Exchequer to attend to. I feel sure that there is a very great deal of leakage going on in the matter of the income tax in respect to the fines on the renewal of leases. Perhaps it will be news to some hon. Members to hear that fines on the renewal of leases are subject to income tax, but there is a special section which makes these fines chargeable. No doubt many hon. Members would suppose that a very large income is derived from this impost. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was good enough to give me information as to the sum assessed for fines on renewals of leases in London in three successive years, and I think the House will be surprised to hear that instead of being a very large sum the totals were only £15,000, £11,000, and £14,000. I cannot help thinking that there must be some leakage there, and that a great many people are escaping taxation. I may point out that if the owner of the property chooses to expend the money he receives from fines in further building or extending his property he escapes the income tax. It will be perhaps a novelty to manufacturers to know that if they spend the money received from fines in extending their cotton mills they are exempted from this tax. That perhaps may be a reason why the sum is so small, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer informed me that there had been no claim during these three years for any reduction or abatement of income-tax on account of rebuilding. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that a great deal of leakage is going on. I would venture to press these three matters on the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I hope that he himself will introduce a very considerable measure for the taxation of land values, but if he does not some more enterprising

Chancellor of the Exchequer will do so in the future.

*MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer has every reason to congratulate himself on the reception given to his proposals not merely by this House but by the country also. I have no reason in any way to dissent from that approval, which has received its crowning glory in the figures which my right hon. friend read out this afternoon in answer to a question as to how the War Loan had been received. I do not intend to digress into a criticism of some of the minor provisions of the Finance Bill, which ought it seems to me to be reserved for the Committee stage, because my experience for the past nine or ten years has been that the House generally discusses the Budget as a whole on the Second Reading of the Finance Bill. I believe the country approves, though perhaps not quite unequivocally, the amounts which it is proposed to raise by loan and by taxation. We have seen, as was to be expected, a little disappointment. Some would rather that more had been raised by loan, but I very respectfully desire to pay my tribute to the equitable distribution of the funds which have to be raised between borrowing and taxation. I would also add that I believe the country, and certainly the House of Commons, will approve of the proportion which the right hon. Gentleman has awarded between indirect and direct taxation. Having those sums to find in an emergency, my right hon. friend has on the whole made a very equitable distribution of the burden. That being the case, the country has done what my right hon. friend expected it would do, because it is determined that this war shall be carried through to a successful and complete issue, and there is not anyone who will in the least shrink from the burden—[Mr. SAMUEL dissented]—except, perhaps, the hon. Gentleman opposite. I think, however, I may say that both the House and the country are practically unanimous on the matter, and, after all, we never have anything absolutely unanimous in this country. The country, having entirely justified the expectations of my right hon. friend, should not, however, prevent us from inquiring whether the proposals which we have to deal with in this emergency are such as this country in a similar emergency in the future

desire. I do not think that is a practical inquiry now, but while I acknowledge that my right hon. friend is entitled to the gratitude of the country for having introduced his Budget and taken the nation into his confidence at the earliest possible moment, I would suggest whether the time has not arrived to examine whether the system of our finance does not require a little revision. The hon. Member for King's Lynn and some newspapers have reproached my right hon. friend for not having introduced what they call an imaginative Budget. My right hon. friend was charged with the poverty of his imagination. I do not share in that reproach, because I rejoice that we have not got an imaginative Chancellor of the Exchequer. Imagination may be a great gift, but imagination in finance often leads to disaster and occasionally to ruin. I believe that our system of indirect taxation does rest on too small a foundation, and that that taxation ought to be drawn from a wider area. But just as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire took twelve months to consider and perfect his wide-reaching scheme of death duties with regard to which, *pace* my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn, I think his reputation will be for all time honourably associated, I hope my right hon. friend will also spend twelve months in examining whether our area of direct taxation should not be extended. It is, however, a very delicate and difficult subject, and I do not believe the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be justified in attempting to vary the existing system in the present emergency. But I hope he will apply his mind to it, not hurriedly, but with deliberation. There is one further subject to which I wish to draw attention. My right hon. friend in introducing his Budget said that the income tax had always been considered as a tax that might properly be increased in time of war, for the reason that it could be readily dealt with by being increased or lowered. I believe no Member of this House will dissent from that maxim, but what I desire to draw my right hon. friend's attention to is that neither he nor his predecessor carried out that maxim. We all recognise that the income tax should be the first tax to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer should turn in time of war; but as well as being the first tax in time of war, it is

Mr. Cohen.

now the first tax to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer turns in time of peace. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire wanted one and a half millions in 1893 he said there was only one tax to provide it, and that was the income tax. But when my right hon. friend had a surplus in 1898 he said he could not take a penny off the income tax because he had only one and a half millions, whereas a penny on the income tax would mean over two millions. The position of the income tax therefore appears to be that the tax is increased in time of war and cannot be decreased in time of peace. When my right hon. friend introduced his Budget he said that with regard to indirect taxation, he looked upon it only as a temporary addition to the existing taxation, and that he hoped it would be merely for one year, but he did not say anything of the kind with reference to the income tax. I do not suggest that he proposes to keep the income tax at a shilling, but while he says that he hopes to take off the increase in indirect taxation next year, the only comfort he has for the income tax payer is that the income tax is a very useful tax because, in theory, you can raise it when short of money and lower it when you have a sufficient surplus. Do not let it be thought that I am arguing in favour of the rich man: he can always take care of himself. It is a mistake to suppose that the income tax is a rich man's tax. By far the greater portion of it is paid by slender incomes of £1,000, £2,000, and £3,000 a year. In the Returns for 1894-5 I find £71,000,000 were assessed on incomes under £3,000 a year, £46,000,000 on incomes above £3,000, £6,000,000 on incomes below £200, and £41,000,000 on incomes under £1,000. We all recognise that the income tax is a war tax, and because we think that it is a war tax, we believe it should not be a peace tax. In dealing with this question of income tax I desire to thank my right hon. friend for the abatements and exemptions he has given to the small income tax payer. Let hon. Gentlemen think what it means on an income of £800 or £900 a year to pay away a twentieth part, besides taxation in respect of tea and other necessities of life. I thank the House for having listened to these observations, and I again congratulate my right hon. friend on his Budget and its reception.

*MR. HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): I wish to express my grateful appreciation of the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the stamps on brokers' contract notes. When he introduced his Budget he promised in effect to keep an open mind as to any representations which might be made to him in regard to the operation of the proposals then before the House. Those representations have since been put before the right hon. Gentleman by deputations, and I am sure it was extremely gratifying to us to hear to-day that the matter has been reconsidered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that for the time being he has withdrawn the clause to which objection has been taken. With that exception, so far as I have been able to judge, the Budget has been received as well as any Budget could have been expected to be received which proposed the colossal taxation that was inevitable. I have not heard many words of objection to the beer tax, nor to the increased tax on spirits, nor to the addition to the income-tax. I do not suppose, however, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will deny to us on this side of the House the consolation of believing that if this Budget had been drawn up on this side it would have contained provisions more acceptable to us. I do not intend to dogmatise on matters of this kind, but if it had fallen to the lot of a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer to have drawn up the Budget, the probabilities are that the income tax would have been more fully graduated than it now is by means of exemptions and abatements, that the tea duty might not have been increased, and that we might have had the beginning of an experiment in the taxation of ground values. I should like to express my cordial approval of the general tone of the speech delivered earlier in the debate by the hon. Member for Exeter. The whole tone of that speech, which enforced economy in so far as economy could rightly be enforced, is one that cannot fail to commend itself in all quarters of the House. I think it is a fortunate circumstance for the country that we have in office just now a Chancellor of the Exchequer who is not extravagant by nature in public affairs, and we may feel sure that he will not sanction any great outlay of public money unless under stress of

real need. If we had a Chancellor of the Exchequer at the present moment who held the national purse-strings more lightly it would have been a great misfortune for the country. I feel certain we need have no fear whatever of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer yielding to the blandishments of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet, who again presented nostrums to which we have been accustomed for many years. He assured the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a view to tempting him that a 10s. duty on corn would have a substantial yield, and although the result would be large, individual payments would be small. I think the right hon. Gentleman committed himself to a very serious fallacy in this respect. He fell into the error of assuming that the consumer would only pay the actual amount paid in duty. That is not really the case in practice. There is not only the duty but also the cost of handling, the cost of bonded warehouses, and many other incidental charges. The suggestion that such a tax should be used for providing old-age pensions is very curious. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to provide for the deserving poor after sixty-five years of age by making everyone poorer under sixty-five by increasing the cost of living. That is, indeed, taking away with the one hand what we give with the other. I note that the right hon. Gentleman still advocates the imposition of a duty on imported manufactured goods. I do not know whether it is worth while to take seriously a suggestion thrown out in such a haphazard way, but although he may hanker after a duty on manufactured goods, I should like to know where there is any clamour on the part of manufacturers for such a duty? During last week the annual meetings of the Associated Chambers of Commerce were held, at which manufacturers from all parts of the country were present, but I did not hear of any desire on their part to have a duty imposed on manufactured goods brought into this country. I think that the Returns of the Board of Trade for last year are a sufficient refutation to the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman, and in view of the very high state of prosperity which they unfold, I do not think the country can be expected to entertain the idea of

reversing a fiscal policy which has existed so long and answered so well.

MR. JOHNSON-FERGUSON (Leicestershire, Loughborough): There is one point which I wish to bring to the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and which, if he is able to answer now, may save trouble to himself and his Department. The right hon. Gentleman is no doubt aware that many debentures are issued by trading companies, to which a provision is attached that, if the issuing company at any time prior to the date at which the debentures are redeemable at par choose, they shall be entitled to redeem at a certain advanced price. Last year a circular was issued from the Inland Revenue Department, calling the attention of trading companies having such debentures to a decision which was given in one of the courts by Mr. Justice Wills and Mr. Justice Bruce, that the stamp duty payable on these debentures was to be paid, not on the par value of each debenture, but on the price at which it could be redeemed at any time during its existence. The particular case tried by the two judges was the case of a £100 debenture issued in 1898, and redeemable at par in 1917, but power was reserved to the company at any time between July, 1900, and a year before the time when the debenture would ordinarily be redeemed, to redeem it at 103. It was decided by the Court that the stamp on these debentures should be based on the price of 103, instead of on the par value. The consequence of that was, I believe, that a circular was sent out by the Board of Inland Revenue calling the attention of companies having such debentures to the fact that they were bound to pay the additional stamp duty on their full value; and I know that in a great many instances debentures were sent up to the Inland Revenue Office to have the extra stamp affixed to them. Since that decision was given this particular case was carried to the Court of Appeal, and was tried there before Lord Justice Smith and Lord Justice Collins, who entirely disagreed with the decision given by the Judges of the Court of First Instance, and reversed their decision. Lord Justice Smith very emphatically laid it down that £100 was the total sum secured by the debenture, and that that was all on which the stamp duty had to be paid. The questions I

want to address to the right hon. Gentleman are: What is he going to do with those trading concerns which have paid the additional stamp duty on these debentures in consequence of the circular issued by the Board of Inland Revenue; and, in the second place, is the case going to be carried to the House of Lords, or is he going to accept the decision of Lord Justice Smith and Lord Justice Collins in the Court of Appeal, and if there is an appeal, and if their decision is upheld by the House of Lords, will this extra stamp duty be returned to those concerned? This is a matter which is exciting a good deal of interest, and if the right hon. Gentleman can answer my question definitely, it will put an end to a good deal of feeling on the matter at the present time.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am afraid that offhand I am not able to answer the question of the learned Member, but if he will be good enough to address it to me in the ordinary way I shall be very happy to do so. But meanwhile, I may say that the action of the Board of Inland Revenue in matters of this kind is, and I think ought to be, to a great extent, independent of the Government of the day. It is the duty of the Board of Inland Revenue to interpret the law by the best advice that can be given to them, and if a case is doubtful and contested by the taxpayer, of course it has to come for the decision of the Court. Whether this decision of the Court of Appeal should be accepted or not is a matter upon which, necessarily, the law officers will advise, and the action of the Inland Revenue must be guided by their advice. Until the matter is settled one way or the other it would be absolutely impossible for me to give an answer to the hon. Member. I need only detain the House for a very short time with regard to the general debate. It has been an extremely interesting debate, but, in singular contrast to the view of the hon. Member for Islington, who commenced it. He began by saying that this was the most oppressive Budget that had been known for a century, and he went on to expound to the House his ideas of taxation, which consisted, I believe, in this, that whatever happens there should be no increase of existing taxes; that, above all, there was at present too much taxation on drink, and that any additional revenue

Mr. Holland.

required should be raised by some new tax, which he did not specify, and which, I am quite sure, he would oppose if anybody proposed it. A better comment upon the wisdom and justice of views of that kind than that which has been afforded in the course of this debate it would be impossible to imagine. I think that the main complaints, if I may call them complaints, against me in regard to my financial proposals for this year have been two. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, supported by my hon. friend the Member for Salisbury, suggested that, in dealing with the financial difficulty due to the war, I had not imposed sufficient additional taxation. I cannot admit that the calculations of my hon. friend the Member for Salisbury or of the right hon. Gentleman as to the amount of taxation which is to go towards the cost of the war were quite adequate. To begin with, we are not asking Parliament to impose only twelve and a-half millions of taxation towards the cost of the war. It is more than fourteen millions altogether, including the arrears of income-tax. But besides that, five and a-half millions, possibly six millions, out of the taxation of the current year goes to the cost of the war.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): It has gone to debt.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It has gone to the cost of the war. It would never go to debt unless it had been beyond the expenditure of the year—in fact a surplus—and as the war expenses come into the expenditure of the year it has gone, necessarily, towards the cost of the war. That altogether in two years is twenty millions towards the cost of the war. And further, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth said that this six millions of taxation was spent in the war instead of paying off the Debt, and assumed that it was precisely the same thing as adding to our debt, I entirely demur to that proposition. It is entirely different. Devoting part of the taxation of the year towards the cost of the war, which but for the war would have gone to the reduction of the Debt, is by no means the same as adding to the debt of the country the cost of the war.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I do not mean to interrupt the right hon. Gentle-

man; but surely, if these five millions had not gone to the expenses of the war, they would have gone to the extinction of the Debt.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No; the question is this. How are you providing for the cost of this war? I provide for it in two ways—by additional taxation, or by existing taxation; and by increasing the debt of the country. This five and a-half or six millions is the proceeds of existing taxation, and therefore is fairly to be taken into account in considering how much is being paid by the taxation of the country and how much is being paid by an addition, whether temporary or otherwise, to the debt of the country. That, I think, is perfectly clear. But, more than that; the right hon. Gentleman said that on the Debt account we were not forty-three millions to the bad, as I stated in my Budget speech, but fifty-three millions to the bad. I do not admit that my proposal to suspend during this year £4,600,000 of the Fixed Debt Charge, which would otherwise have gone to the reduction of the Debt, is the same thing as incurring new debt. I admit it is not paying off old debt, but it is not the same thing as incurring new debt or adding to the existing debt of the country for the purposes of the war. They are two very different things, and unless hon. Members separate them in their minds I do not think they can form a fair estimate as to what the country is being called upon to pay out of taxation towards the expenses of the war. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth asked me how I propose to provide for the interest on the thirty millions loan which has been recently raised. I called the attention of the Committee in my Budget speech to the fact that putting the expenses of the war next year altogether aside, and simply taking what may be called the ordinary expenditure of the year, as against the ordinary revenue of the year, there would be a surplus of between £800,000 and £900,000 of revenue over expenditure. And that happens, curiously enough, to be just about the amount that will be required towards paying the interest on the thirty millions. But, besides that, as we are adding fourteen millions to the taxation of the country, we think it is perfectly fair to say that we are in that way providing also towards the interest on the Loan which will be bor-

rowed. I admit that we do not earmark any particular sum towards the payment of that debt. But why? Because at present we think it is universally admitted that it is impossible to say how much the total debt which may be incurred on account of this war may be. It may be more than we at present expect. It may be, on the other hand, very much less than the House has authorised owing to the recovery of a considerable part of it from the Transvaal; and until, in fact, the amount is settled it is absolutely impossible for us to make permanent provision towards the repayment of the capital of the Debt which has been authorised by Parliament. There are one or two points affecting the Finance Bill on which criticisms were made. In the first place, the hon. Member for King's Lynn unfavourably criticised two clauses of the Bill relating to the death duties. He accused me of imposing, by one of them, a new death duty and of adding to the severity of the Finance Act of 1894. The position is simply this. As the law now stands, if a man possessing an estate in fee simple, whether in personalty or in realty, chooses during his life to give it away to another person, if that gift is made more than twelve months before his death, that property, of course, will not pass at his death, and will not be charged with estate duty. But if he is the life tenant of a settled estate, and gives his interest away to the reversioner, at any moment before his death—even on his death-bed—by the fact of that gift, the whole property, not merely his life-interest, which may be worth five minutes purchase, but also the estate of the reversioner, will escape the estate duty. Now, I think my hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk put this question very plainly to the House. I think he showed that it was absolutely necessary in this matter to maintain equal treatment between settled property and unsettled property; and it would be, I think, an outrage, at the very time in which we are increasing the taxation on all other classes of the country, if we allowed, by such a proceeding as this, the life-tenants and reversioners of settled estates, who are certainly among the wealthier classes of the country, absolutely to escape the estate duty. Then, Sir, the Member for King's Lynn unfavourably criticised the clause in the Bill relating to the aggrega-

Sir M. Hicks Beach.

tion of property. That is a very technical subject, and I think it can be better dealt with in Committee than on the Second Reading. But I may say generally that the clause in the Bill is the outcome of a careful inquiry by very competent persons. Two years ago this question of the law relating to the aggregation of property was raised by the noble Lord the Member for the Biggleswade Division of Bedfordshire, and was discussed at considerable length. Nothing came of it then. But last year the discussion was renewed, and I think all of us who took part in the debate were convinced that, although there were difficulties in the way of an amendment of the law, yet the present condition of the law was unsatisfactory. And in accordance with the general feeling of the House, I promised to appoint a Departmental Committee to consider this particular question. That Committee consisted of the Member for Haddingtonshire, the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries Burghs, the present Solicitor General, my hon. friend the Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk, my noble friend the Member for the Biggleswade Division of Bedfordshire, and the Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue. I do not think a more competent Committee could be got together. They arrived unanimously at the conclusion which is embodied in this clause of the Bill. The hon. Member for Halifax brought two questions before me with reference to the income tax. He said that income tax at present was not sufficiently charged on ground values, and that some alteration should be made with the object of securing, through that tax, a contribution from vacant building land in the neighbourhood of towns. I do not quite see how that can be secured when, this being a tax on income, there is really little or no income from the land. I may remind the hon. Member that property of this kind has been brought under Imperial taxation very much more than it used to be through the death duties. There is no doubt that the contribution of building land towards Imperial taxation is very different under the present law to what it was before the Finance Act of 1894. I think that what the hon. Member has in his mind is part of the very difficult question of the taxation of ground values. I agree very much with the hon. Member for

the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk that whatever it may be possible to extract from land, whether built upon or likely to be built upon, by way of taxation, beyond that which is now demanded, will probably go more to local taxation than to Imperial taxation. I do not think, if you fairly consider the existing state of the law in regard to death duties, you will find it possible to extract equitably more from this class of property towards Imperial taxation than at present. As to the suggestion that income-tax should be paid on fines for the renewal of building leases, I will inquire further into that matter. The subject is a highly technical one and one by no means easy to deal with. It may be that fines of this nature which are at present properly liable to income-tax do not pay it; but it is extremely difficult to ascertain when these fines are paid and what is their amount; but I will call the attention of the Inland Revenue authorities to the subject and see how best to secure that the existing law shall be properly carried into effect. I do not know that there is any other particular matter included in the Finance Bill which was the subject of adverse criticism. No doubt one or two speakers have said that the tea duty was unfairly increased as compared with the duty on alcohol and tobacco, but I think that has been fairly answered when it is said that the tea duty is a low one when compared with that on alcohol and tobacco at the present time. There has been a good deal of discussion in the course of the evening upon the general scope of our present system of taxation. I think no greater tribute could have been paid to that system than that which was actually paid by one or two members who were desirous to do what they could towards securing economy in expenditure. It was actually alleged by more than one speaker that the best way of doing that was to add in some way to the subjects of existing taxation, in order, by irritating the taxpayer, to make him more interested in economy. Does not that show, if anything could show, how lightly our taxation bears on the country at the present time? I do not suppose for a moment that the manner in which this Budget has been received both by the House and the country is due to any particular merit of my own or of any proposal I have made. I know it is mainly due

to the fact that, taken as a whole, the great majority of the people feel that the expenditure required is necessary and that they are ready to submit to be taxed for it. But what I have endeavoured to do is this: I have not cared in the least for the charge of want of imagination. I have not cared about the observations that have been addressed to me in the press and elsewhere as to the humdrum nature of the Budget, or the criticism that it is a Budget that any school-boy could have prepared. That, to my mind, is a compliment. I have felt that this was a temporary necessity which the country had to meet, and that I was bound to take care that in dealing with a temporary necessity I should do nothing which would have, perhaps permanently, an injurious effect on commerce and trade. I undoubtedly felt a desire not to raise new fiscal questions that might excite differences—and acute differences—in this House. I do not think it would be advisable to do so at the present time, but I should not have shrunk from doing that if I had thought it was necessary and right. I did not think so, and I have been more confirmed in that impression by the course of the debate this evening. What are the suggestions of hon. Members like the Member for King's Lynn? He was good enough to suggest that we should tax diamonds, pearls, feathers, and lace in a way which made me doubt whether he had ever sufficiently realised that two of the highest and holiest feelings in woman's nature are the love of diamonds and the love of smuggling. But when the hon. Member went on to suggest that I should lower the limit of income-tax and collect it from persons of smaller income—I do not know what expedient may be necessary in the course of the finance of the future—but I do think that any proposal of that kind would be full of difficulty and danger. Then my right hon. friend the Member for the Isle of Thanet suggested that a shilling duty on corn, though good in principle, was a mere flea-bite, and that to do any good whatever we ought to have at least a 10s. duty on corn in order to meet the growing expenditure of the country. Of course, it was tempting to hear that such a duty would produce twenty millions. But when he went on to say he would spend the proceeds in old-age pensions, and that I was also in some way to

provide for preferential treatment of colonial produce, by which I must necessarily tax a considerable part of the twenty millions, I began then to think his fiscal proposals, whatever their effect in promoting the peculiar ideas he is so fond of ventilating, would not produce much towards the ordinary expenditure of the country. There was one speech which I listened to with real pleasure, and that was the speech from my hon. friend the Member for Exeter. My hon. friend is a man of great financial experience and knowledge, and I am sure that the House will feel that in him we have one who will in the future be a great acquisition to our debates. My hon. friend gave utterance to some valuable truths, and nothing was more welcome in his speech than the stress he laid upon the necessity in these days of economy. I welcome him as an aid to me in my task in this matter. At present I am thankful to say that, if I put war expenditure apart, the financial prospects of the country, even at the present rate of expenditure, are by no means bad. I have shown to the House that but for war expenditure, and including the permanent additions to our expenditure on the military services, the ordinary revenue of the year, without additional taxation, would show a substantial surplus over the expenditure. Of course times may change. It may be necessary, if in the face of commercial distress we have to meet an expenditure in the future greater even than that with which we are at present engaged, for us to look beyond the existing sources of taxation and to endeavour to find new sources of taxation to supplement our revenue. I know that that may be necessary. I remember that in the year 1854, just after Mr. Gladstone had made his great alterations in the tariff of the country, when he had removed I do not know how many articles from our Customs tariff, and had effected a great financial change, he said that war expenditure was a thing which could not be limited by any preconceived policy of this kind, and that it might be necessary even to restore some of the duties which he had just abolished if the financial necessities of the war should demand it.

So it may be necessary some day for this country to enlarge the number of subjects on which we levy indirect taxation. I do not deny it for a moment, but at present it is not necessary. I have thought it wiser and better to adhere to our existing sources of taxation for the present emergency, and I will conclude by thanking the House for the manner in which this Budget has been received, and by expressing the hope that after the discussion which has taken place, we may be permitted now to take the division on the Second Reading.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): The arrangement to close the debate at an early hour this evening was arrived at to some extent in order that Irish Members might have the whole of the sitting on Thursday for the discussion of the alleged grievance with regard to the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland. That being so the Irish Members have, I believe, abstained altogether from taking part in the discussion to-night, and, recognising the desire of the First Lord to meet our wishes in this matter, I desire to state in one or two brief sentences that the Irish Members do not regard this as a "humdrum" Budget; it is a Budget which imposes upon Ireland more additional taxation than has ever been proposed in any year since the passage of the Act of Union. It proposes to impose on Ireland an additional taxation of considerably over £1,000,000, and that for the purpose of enabling the Government to provide the expenses of a war at which the whole conscience of the Irish people revolted. Under the circumstances I think it would not be fair or advantageous for me to dilate upon this matter; it is enough for me to protest on behalf of the Irish Members against this Budget, which we regard as an aggravation of the injustice under which we suffer. From the Irish point of view the Budget is iniquitous and most unjust to our country, and with this brief word of protest against it the Irish Members will record their votes in the Lobby against the Second Reading of this Bill.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 182 ;
Noes, 30. (Division List No. 73.)

AYES.

Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn

Sir M. Hicks Beach.

Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A.J. (Manch'r)

Banbury, Frederick George
 Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. Smith (Hts.)
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Bethell, Commander
 Bill, Charles
 Billson, Alfred
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bond, Edward
 Broadhurst, Henry
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Burt, Thomas
 Butcher, John George
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, Austen (Worc'r)
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Charrington, Spencer
 Clare, Octavius Leigh
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
 Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Cornwallis, Fienes Stanley W.
 Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
 Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
 Denny, Colonel
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
 Doughty, George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Faber, George Denison
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Flower, Ernest
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibbs, H. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J.
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
 Goldsworthy, Major General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward

Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Green, Walford D. (Wendnesbury)
 Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
 Gretton, John
 Griffith, Ellis J.
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Harwood, George
 Heath, James
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
 Helder, Augustus
 Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
 Hoare, Ed. Brodie (Hampstead)
 Holland, William Henry
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Houston, R. P.
 Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
 Hutton, John (York, N. R.)
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
 Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Henry
 Lafone, Alfred
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn.)
 Lawrence, W. F. (Liverpool)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Leng, Sir John
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool)
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 McCrae, George
 McKenna, Reginald
 Malcolm, Ian
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arth. H. A. (Deptford)
 Moss, Samuel
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
 Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Newdigate, Francis Alex.
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens

Pease, Herbert P. (Darlingt'n)
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plunkett, Rt. Hon. H. Curzon
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rankin, Sir James
 Renshaw, Charles Bine
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Robinson, Brooke
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
 Round, James
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, James P. (Lanark)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Wm. Ed. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Ure, Alexander
 Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wilson, Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wyndham, George
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Mr. Anstruther and Mr.
 Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N. E.)
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Clancy, John Joseph
 Commins, Andrew
 Crean, Eugene
 Crilly, Daniel
 Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
 Doogan, P. C.
 Engledew, Charles John
 Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
 Farrell, Thomas J. (Kerry, S.)

Field, William (Dublin)
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Harrington, Timothy
 Jameson, Major J. Eustace
 Kilbride, Denis
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cum'land)
 Lloyd-George, David
 Macaleese, Daniel
 McDermott, Patrick
 McGhee, Richard

Molloy, Bernard Charles
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 O'Keeffe, Francis Arthur
 Parnell, John Howard
 Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Wilson, Jos. H. (Middlesbrough)
 TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Captain Donelan and Mr.
 Patrick O'Brien.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Thursday.

SUPPLY [13TH MARCH] REPORT.

1 Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [16th March], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Third Resolution, 'That a sum, not exceeding £15,200,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901.'"

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): I wish briefly to draw attention to the question of the pay given to the colonial forces in South Africa, and particularly to the forces raised locally. There is a sum of £3,000,000 in the Vote for the pay of 25,000 colonial troops raised in South Africa, while the sum allocated for the British force of 400,000 men is £8,278,000. I want to know why the British soldier should be paid 1s. 4d. a day, while the colonial troops receive 5s. per day. Why is the amateur soldier paid four times as much as the trained man? This rate of payment is exceedingly unfair to our troops. The only indication of defence by the First Lord of the Treasury the other night was that this was a case of emergency—that the Government had to raise a force in South Africa in a hurry and, consequently, to pay the men any price which would induce them to come forward. Surely if that is so, the fault is with the Government. They knew perfectly well that this war was coming on them in a few weeks or months, and yet they left South Africa in such a position that they had to raise 25,000 men locally to defend it. Plenty of men could have been got at home, but because the Government did not prepare for war we have to pay 5s. a day each to 25,000 men. Owing to the blunders of the Government, not of the War Office, the country is £2,000,000 a year worse off. I have not the slightest doubt the War Office have mobilised the troops as soon as the Government indicated to them there was a necessity for it, and they have done it in the shortest possible period of time. I do not think the action of the

War Office is open to criticism in this matter. I repeat, I think this difference of pay is exceedingly unfair to the British soldier. Now, I desire to know whether it is proposed that these men shall be paid 5s. a day during the war only, or are they to be utilised as an army of occupation. If we are going to annex the two Republics, and that is the only inference that can be drawn from the reply of Lord Salisbury to President Kruger, there is no doubt we shall have to employ a large army of occupation for several years in South Africa generally. We shall have to police the whole of these three great provinces, and I am told that 50,000 men will be required for this business. We shall have to do as we did in the case of Egypt. But there is this difference. In Egypt we could utilise native troops, in South Africa we must fall back on the British Army. If the colonial troops are to form part of the army of occupation, is it proposed to cut down their pay so as to put them on a level with the other troops in the British Army?

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I think that question is a complicated one, which under present circumstances it is not desirable to discuss much. I rise for the purpose of raising two other questions. One is the wholesale distribution of commissions and the manner in which the War Office is carrying it out. The other has reference to the Royal Reserve battalions. With regard to the first, one thousand and one hundred direct commissions are to be given and all hon. Members know of the policy of the War Office is that they are giving them to the universities for men up to thirty years and offering them to the public schools. We have no figures as to the distribution between those bodies.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. WYNDHAM, Dover): Thirty are to be given to the public schools.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: My broad question is, what is the aggregate number of commissions to be offered to the universities, what is the aggregate number to be offered to the public schools, and what is the aggregate number remaining, and in what way are the War Office going to dispose of them? This is a question which seriously affects the cadets at Woolwich and Sandhurst, and I cannot see that

the Under Secretary has disproved the charge my right hon. friend the Member for North-east Manchester brought against the scheme that is unjust to those cadets. The other point is this. You have got a large force of Volunteers serving at the front in South Africa, partly furnished by the colonies and partly by the United Kingdom. It is a matter of common knowledge that a large number serving are gentlemen of education, standing and knowledge, but who have not that knack of doing paper work well to secure their passing at a competitive examination. They are going through the best proof, and they are affording the best opportunities to their superior officers to select those that are most qualified to be officers in Her Majesty's Army. I ask my right hon. friend as representing the War Office to tell us whether the War Office has got any policy at all with regard to that matter. My own information is that there are 1,100 commissions to be given, and the least that can be done is to reserve 300 of these to be placed at the disposal of the generals in the field in South Africa for them to select the men on whom they should be conferred. My hon. friend recognises the necessity of doing everything we can to show a generous and hearty spirit in reciprocating the action of the colonies in sending troops to South Africa; and I can conceive of no policy more fitted to accentuate our appreciation than the fact of reserving a considerable proportion of those 1,100 commissions to be awarded, at the discretion of the generals, to those who are now serving as private soldiers or non-commissioned officers in South Africa. I do hope my hon. friend will give us an explicit and broad reply showing that the War Office really appreciates the situation and that they have a policy in this matter. Another question I wish to speak upon is that of the Royal Reserve Battalion. I do wonder if the House sufficiently appreciates what the War Office is doing in this matter. It is absolutely and entirely a new departure in our policy with regard to Regular troops. The foundation and the essence of the obligation of the Regular troops is that they are for general service, ready to go anywhere and do anything; but you are calling back into the ranks of the Regular service, and giving large bonuses in doing it, men whose service is limited to the United

Kingdom. When you consider the precedent that is being established, I think those who know anything about Army questions at all will forgive me for not only moving a reduction of the Vote, but for explaining my absolute objection to what is proposed. I would not trouble the House now with arguments on the subject were it not that we have not a sufficient or explicit description of the reason for the policy inducing the War Office to make that new departure. My hon. friend in introducing this matter to the House spoke of it as a very interesting experiment. Well, I think we have a right to know what induced them to try this new and interesting experiment. Is it part of a general policy or a haphazard policy to bring part of the force back? The experiment, as far as he justified it, was stated to be in consequence of new discoveries made by the War Office. The War Office had suddenly discovered that there was unorganised material to draw upon. Men of the Regular Army whose service had expired, and who had completed their engagement, were available to be called up if they would come. But the worst thing of all was that he said it was an indefinite scheme. I do think that in making an entirely new departure in arrangements those arguments and reasons were wholly insufficient and inadequate, and I wish to give him a clear and explicit opportunity, in view of the reduction I shall move, of telling us and letting the House and the country understand what is the policy the War Office had in view in taking this entirely new departure. My objection to it may be briefly stated now. He said that a great deal—and it seemed to me the only reason the War Office gave for this new departure—of interest, deep interest, was now taken in "interior" defence. I think we have a right to know the meaning of this new term. I only understand defence as a general defence of this country. We cannot argue that now, but I feel very strongly that this is the small end of the wedge of a policy that is determined to ignore the influence of sea power as the determining military armament of this country. [Laughter.] Of course, my hon. friend laughs at that. Really, it is lamentable, my hon. friend, as representing the War Office charged with the military responsibility of this great Empire, should laugh at the influence of sea power on our military

arrangements. The question before the House is your Imperial policy, and the point I now call attention to is the extent to which the War Office ignores the influence of sea power in regard to our military arrangements, and, therefore, when we see the War Office taking a new departure to give large bounties to soldiers to come back into the ranks and at the same time to limit their service to the United Kingdom, I think it is an indication that the War Office do not appreciate the position that they are taking a retrograde step. You are offering to any man between twenty-one and forty-five who will come back to the service and form a local Reserve battalion a bounty of £22, and you are making an absolute and specific stipulation that under no circumstance is the man to be moved out of the United Kingdom. My hon. friend stated that up to last Saturday week the result had been, as he termed it, magnificent. He said 17,000 odd men had come back, and he gave us the number of military and artillery, but left out over 2,500. Why were these 2,500 left out? Were they cavalrymen who were called back to their arm of the service? I ask what sort of drivers you will get for the Royal Horse Artillery among men who left the service at twenty-five, and having been employed in sedentary pursuits now turn up at forty-five to obtain this bounty? You have said that the principle is that they should join their own arm of the service. Can any man in this House conceive the mobility of a troop of Royal Horse Artillery composed of men between forty and forty-five? The only ground on which this expenditure of money could be defended would be that the real attraction for the old soldier coming back to the army is to go to the front. [Hear, hear!] Hear, hear! Then that is why you offer him £22 to stay at home? You give these large bounties to prevent them from carrying out their desire to go to the front. Now, does that not make the position worse than ever? You are calling these men a Royal Reserve Battalion. What are they a reserve for? They are not a reserve of your Regular Army. The reserve for the Regular Army is a reserve capable of filling the ranks of the Regular Army, wherever it is. You are giving bonuses to this reserve for the purpose of securing that they will not be a reserve. The only explanation is that it is an absolutely retrograde step, and a pre-

Sir John Colomb.

cedent that is dangerous to the Army. Without troubling the House further, I shall take the opportunity of recording my individual vote against establishing a principle which is opposed to every principle on which your Regular Army is founded. It is an Imperial and a mobile army, and to pay £22 to men to rejoin the Regular Army to go nowhere and do nothing is a principle I cannot take the responsibility of supporting.

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): Not only does this Royal Reserve not form a reserve of the Army, but it is really doing a great injustice to what is the Reserve, which is the Militia. It will encourage men to go into this Royal Reserve, and for the future men will not join the Militia, because they will think that they will be prevented from earning this big bounty in the case of war. Everything is done in time of peace to abolish the Militia, and now you are going to give it another blow by giving encouragement to old soldiers not to go into the Militia. A militiaman gets a bounty of £5, and he gets his pay. That is payment for his duty, it is not payment for being an old soldier. It is a small sum to put in comparison with £22 given to the other men. It is really a very hard case, and I am sorry it is out of order that a reduction should be moved, because it is one of the subjects that the people of the country ought to know more about. With reference to the question raised by the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth—the hardness on the young men out in Africa who are Militia officers attached to regular regiments—I heard of a case the other day where a Militia officer attached to a regular regiment, and who was serving in South Africa, was superseded by an officer appointed from home. Cases of that kind are likely to recur, and I think that is partly because you are not giving the Generals at the Cape sufficient commissions to give to men raised from the ranks. I think a larger number of those commissions should be given to men out at the Cape.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I was surprised to find the hon. Member for Carnarvon taking an interest in Army matters, and I said to myself, Is Saul also amongst the prophets? But the hon. Member soon revealed the fact that he was a 'prentice hand. The hon. Member complained that

money was wasted in employing Volunteers in South Africa who would not have been needed if the regular forces had been maintained there on a larger scale. Taking the Volunteer forces in South Africa at 21,000, their equivalent in Regular troops would be twenty-one battalions, and twenty-one battalions in South Africa involved twenty-one more battalions at home. The cost of those forty-two battalions would be something like £2,600,000 a year. I think that shows that he has not studied this question quite so anxiously as it ought to have been studied.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: I am sure that nothing I have said justifies my honourable friend in coming to that conclusion.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth asked for a broad and explicit statement on the question of the distribution of commissions. The very totals which he asked for have been given already to the right hon. Member for North-east Manchester, in order that he might pursue his very important investigations in the right way instead of addressing questions to me. It is clearly not a subject that can be debated night after night in this House, and I cannot point out the relative merits of those candidates.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: What I asked was what number was to be reserved for distribution among the Volunteers, home and colonial, in South Africa.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I can only repeat that this is not a question which can profitably be discussed in this House. It may interest a few, but must place a great burden on the patience of many hon. Members who are willing that this should be dealt with by the authorities until you have a *prima facie* case on which your argument may be based. Explanations have been asked with respect to the new departure. That subject has formed the whole tenor of eight or nine speeches I have made in this House, because we were face to face with a new situation. I imagine that every Member of this House knows what that situation was. We had to send an enormous number of men, an enormous number of artillery and cavalry, more than two army corps, to South Africa, not, as everybody supposed might possibly

be the case, as an incident in the second and successful stage of a war against a first class Power, but as a phase in a war arising from difficulties in our colonial Empire. Whether the policy of the Government and of all its predecessors has been right or wrong, it has been the policy both of the present Government and of all its predecessors that we ought to be in a position to send two army corps abroad. But nobody has ever supposed that that would be done except as against a first-class Power. Therefore it has always been hoped that we could, out of our Army at home, which supplies the Army abroad, either maintain three army corps at home, or as a second phase of a struggle with a first-class Power send two army corps abroad. We are now left in this country with only a fraction of one army corps. The military advisers of the Government have told us that we ought to have three army corps in this country, organised and mobile. The adoption of the plan of offering special terms to soldiers who have served with the colours is recommended by the principal advisers of the Secretary of State for War. In the judgment of the Commander-in-Chief, now and at any time during the last fifteen years we ought to be able to put three organised army corps into the field. That being so, and the trained men not existing organised in the country, but unorganised, it is recommended that they should be organised. That is the whole of the story.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): The answer of the Under Secretary is even more unsatisfactory on this occasion than his answers have been on former occasions. His answer to my hon. friend behind me is hardly fair. It is an undoubted fact that the effect in the minds of the men is one of discontent.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member produced no evidence of discontent existing in their minds, and I have no reason to believe that it does.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I have accepted all along myself the statement of the Under Secretary of State that he thinks it unwise that this question should be discussed, and I am content with that statement. With regard to the Royal Reserve Battalions, as the hon.

Member opposite has said, it is an entirely new departure from the previous policy of this country as regards the Regular Army. It was never mentioned here. It was concealed from us. The Under Secretary of State has attacked the hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth on the ground that he holds on this matter opinions peculiar to himself and which he thinks no one else in the country holds. I venture to say that the great majority of members hold that opinion, and the House was absolutely startled when they first became aware that this new Regular force was for service only at home.

MR. WYNDHAM: The charge of concealment cannot be brought against us.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: In our early debates here that proposal was not disclosed. It was supposed that Vote 1 was the one on which this matter was to be discussed. I only regret that it should have been passed without any debate at all on the previous occasion when it came before the House. This proposal is the negation of views that are held by the great majority of the people of the country, who believe that the defence of this country against invasion is best made in a naval rather than a land form. You have an enormous number of infantry for land service at home. The difficulty here is not the number of men. It is to make a good army of them against those troubles to which the hon. Member has referred. The real defence of the country against projects of invasion is to a larger extent realised in her Fleet and in her supremacy at sea. For the large sums of money which are spent on the Army you require to get your return in a force capable of going anywhere and doing anything. You have a great number of men at home in these old soldiers from whom you get a number of infantry to add to the large number for home service which you already possess in the Volunteers. What you need, it seems to me, is a force which—under certain circumstances that all of us can foresee are possibilities, but we hope not probabilities—could go to any portion of the world. We are now in this position: we are spending enormous sums on our peace defence, quite apart from questions of the war, and these enormous sums are increasing

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in amount very rapidly indeed. Therefore, when you have to choose between a number of things, not being able to pay for all, or to do everything you wish to do, you should select those things which are most vital to your interests. And this scheme of requiring a certain number of time-expired men, who, from the very conditions of the case, must be mainly infantry soldiers, should not be limited by the condition that the men were to serve only at home. That is not an opinion held by my hon. and gallant friend only; it is not the opinion merely of certain eccentric individuals, it is the opinion of the great majority of the Members of this House and of the people throughout the country who have studied the question. ["No, no!"] Having some means of ascertaining the opinion of Members who are interested in this subject on either side of the House, I know their real opinion is opposed to the proposal.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): While I think it is just that the War Office should take advantage of the present national emergency, I am of opinion that they are going rather further than they are warranted by asking us to sanction, under the plea of emergency measures, things that will last a great deal longer than this emergency will last. I entirely associate myself with what has been said by the last two speakers on this question of the Royal Reserve Battalions, and, so far from considering it to be a heresy, I cannot conceive any reason why the majority of the Members of this House or of the people of the country should entertain any other opinion. My hon. friend said that the military advisers had thought it a good thing to take advantage of a certain amount of military material in the country.

MR. WYNDHAM: What I said was that the military advisers said now the same as they had said for twelve or fourteen years past, namely, that we ought to have a force of three army corps in this country.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I quite admit the fact that they have given this advice and that it has never been followed, but that was not my point. What I understood the hon. Gentleman to say was that the military advisers had said it was desirable to make use of a certain amount of military material in the country.

If he did not say so I presume the advice must have been given, because the War Office have done so.

MR. WYNDHAM: In order to make up that force.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: In order to make up that force. But it has never yet been suggested that we should raise an army corps for the purpose of being under all circumstances retained in this country. We require some justification for excepting this small contingent from the law which always has governed the recruiting of troops for the service of this country. The whole tendency has been in the opposite direction. Within the last few days the hon. Gentleman has told us that the force which from time immemorial has been confined strictly to this country—the Militia—is now enlisted on terms which are to make its removal from this country coincide with almost every demand that a foreign war may make. We have no reason to suppose there was any military opinion anywhere in favour of—to use the expression of the right hon. bart.—“tying by the leg” a certain number of battalions. I do not see that in order to obtain the men it is necessary that it should be so, and I entirely fail to recognise any reason for it. I object to this proposal because it is really trying to do too much under this plea of emergency. This is a great departure from our recognised policy. It is all very well to laugh at my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Great Yarmouth when he mentions the question of the Navy. The question of the Navy is one which concerns the people of this country far more than the question of the Army, and it is not fair to put my hon. and gallant friend off by an allusion to the opinion of our military advisers, who, after all, have not been so extraordinary correct in the past that we should bow down whenever we hear their name mentioned. We have been hurried through these debates from a variety of reasons, some of which are good, and some bad, but as we are now practically dealing with the subject before us I wish to enter my respectful protest against the passage, under the guise of emergency measures, of these two items, which are going to last a very great deal longer than the emergency. We are being pledged by the raising of these twelve new battalions to the continuance of the system which has proved so detri-

mental in the past. It is no use pretending that these battalions are anything to do with our present emergency. They are not going to be raised in time for this emergency, and we shall have to go on with this system and add to the quota of recruits to be found, not in war times but in peace time. I think when we are asked to sanction the raising of these battalions we should have some explanation from the hon. Gentleman of the processes to which he is going to resort in order to achieve his object. My hon. friend said that the recruiting question is really at the bottom of the whole matter, and he apparently had some sanguine expectation that all the experience of the past would be contradicted and reversed in the future. He told us that the recruiting returns had shown a steady increase of yield during the last five years. That is a mistake; the hon. Gentleman has been misinformed. The numbers have increased during the last two years, which have been years of very exceptional character, when the standard of requirement has been very much lowered, and exceptional efforts have been made to fill new battalions. But for four or five successive years up to 1898 the numbers steadily declined. I disagree with the Department in attempting to raise these new battalions as long as our present system goes on, and I greatly regret that we have been asked to give our assent to the continuance of that system, as we are practically compelled to do by this proposal. There is one other point to which I wish to allude. My hon. friend challenged my statement that at the commencement of this war not a single battalion did go to the front. I hoped that, having challenged my statement, he would give me the name of at least one battalion. I have not received that name, and I am fully confident I never shall, because the battalion does not exist. We ought to be given some information as to the new scheme by which it is intended to prevent a recurrence of a circumstance of that kind. It was said incidentally by my hon. friend that we wanted a certain number of battalions always ready for war; but we have had absolutely no indication that any scheme is contemplated or being prepared to produce that result in the future any more than in the past. On these two points I wish to register my protest. It is perfectly idle, of course, during the present

session, to attempt to hinder the passage of these proposals into law; they will pass, and no doubt we should reap the bitter fruit in years to come. But I do not desire it to be said that I or anyone who realises the disastrous nature of these proposals have lightly agreed to them under any plea but that of necessity, and the duty of supporting the Government in a time such as the present.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): The figures themselves in connection with this Vote are most suggestive. We have here a Vote of £3,000,000 for 21,000 South African troops, and a Vote of £8,250,000 for 400,000 British troops. The disparity is enormous, and if the hon. Gentleman thinks it will not excite any feeling of indignation on the part of British soldiers it must be on the supposition that they do not share in the common feelings of the rest of mankind. The disparity is increased when it is remembered that many of these men who are being paid at the higher rate are refugees from Johannesburg, who really subsisted on charity before they were taken into the South African forces. Yet they are paid at the rate of four times as much as the regular British soldier. The rest of the force are the unemployed of South Africa, and the very class on whose behalf we are fighting, and in the interest of whose political designs we have embarked on this enormous war. Surely, instead of being paid more, they ought to be willing to work for less, seeing we are fighting their battles. England is being bled on all sides. Our soldiers are bled literally on account of these people, and now the taxpayers are to be bled in order to pay this South African force at an enormously disproportionate rate. I am perfectly certain that this is a point upon which the British Army and the British people will feel sore when they begin to consider, as they will consider after the war is over, the cost of this conflict.

COMMANDER BETHELL (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): I rather take exception to the view of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean and of the hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth, who seem to press the doctrine of naval defence to an extreme point. The fact is that historically, as well as *prima facie*, defensive defence has always played a

Mr. Arnold-Forster.

very great part in war, and however true it may be that the defence of our shores is in our Fleet, I am perfectly persuaded we could not afford to leave this country denuded of troops even for the purpose of defence. I do not agree that the Government have done wrong in the special effort they have made to obtain what I may fairly call a reserve army for an emergency purpose. Personally I should be disposed, if I were discussing this matter at any length, to question the wisdom of having sent Militia regiments abroad so largely. I should have thought the men to be embodied in this reserve army would be better fitted for that purpose. But that is not the question I am now discussing. I merely want to put in a protest against the extreme doctrine of naval defence being pushed too far, and against the attempt not infrequently made to persuade those who sit in this House, and those outside who are interested in this question, that defensive defence is a mistake and ought to be abandoned, and that offensive defence by a mobile military force is the only defence that ought to be considered. I do not believe that view is sound; I am certain that historically it is unsound, and I doubt whether men who carried on wars before would not have seen the point if it was true.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: St. Vincent.

COMMANDER BETHELL: My hon. and gallant friend mentions St. Vincent, but it must not be forgotten that there was a large defensive force in this country during all that time, and, above all, do not let us forget that in another great maritime war we may not be able to put our hands on a Nelson or a St. Vincent; they are the products of long efforts of fighting. I should be very sorry indeed to see any Government risk the fortunes of this country by trusting entirely to naval defence, although I would be the last person to depreciate the enormous value we all attach to that service.

*COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): The speech of the hon. and gallant Member who has just sat down would seem to imply that the whole of our defence depends on the raising of these reserve battalions, and its whole tendency was to the view that if the Navy was not in existence our shores would be undefended.

The hon. and gallant Member has failed to take into consideration the enormous number of troops which already exist. If I understand the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for War correctly, his great justification for raising these battalions is that they are necessary to complete the three Army corps which are considered requisite for the defence of this country. I think he can only arrive at that conclusion by putting on one side all the battalions told off for garrisons in all parts of the country. What need is there at the present time for these battalions? If there was a foreign foe in the Channel it would be justifiable, but at present I think the fair argument is that we have plenty of troops if only they are properly organised. I cannot say that I look upon this scheme as at all satisfactory. It means that a number of officers have been called up from the retired list and a great number of reserve men from their civil avocations. If there is no ulterior motive in this scheme I think it will lead to very great discontent in the country. When these reserve battalions are disbanded the officers will go back to the retired list. The men will have been called up from their employment; they will have received the £22 bounty and very possibly have spent it in a way not altogether desirable; they will go back to work at a time when the reserve men are returning from South Africa, and there will probably be great difficulty in obtaining employment. The scheme is not one which finds sympathy with the practical soldiers of the country. It is an emergency scheme of the Government, and as such I shall support it, because, at the present time I feel that the country is in difficulties and that it is my duty to uphold the Government. But at the same time I feel that, as a practical soldier, it is my duty to lay before the House my own hesitancy about the policy and about the future good of this scheme of reserve battalions.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid), whose remarks were inaudible in the Press Gallery, briefly addressed the House.

*MR. SPEAKER called the attention of the House to the continued irrelevance on the part of the hon. Member, and directed him to discontinue his speech.

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY [16TH MARCH].

Resolutions reported:—

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £555,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, &c., of the Medical Establishment, and for Medicines, &c., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £2,288,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Bounty, &c., of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 131,571, including 30,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £144,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Miscellaneous Charges of the Yeomanry Cavalry, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £1,230,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including Pay, etc. of the Permanent Staff, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901."

Resolutions agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS [15TH MARCH].

Resolutions reported:

1. "That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st day of March, 1899 and 1900, the sum of £466,770 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."

2. "That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, the sum of £46,156,500 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."

Resolutions agreed to: Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. James William

Lowther, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Hanbury.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

"To apply certain sums out of the Consolidated Fund to the service of the years ending on the 31st day of March, 1899, 1900, and 1901," presented accordingly, and read the First time; to be read a Second time to-morrow.

CENSUS [EXPENSES].

Resolution reported.

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any Expenses incurred for the purposes of the Census, under any Acts of the present Session for taking the Census in Great Britain and Ireland."

Resolution agreed to.

CENSUS (GREAT BRITAIN) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary not to press the Bill, as many hon. Members interested in the measure had been taken by surprise, and did not anticipate that it would be reached.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): This Bill has been through Committee stage, and has been subjected to a great deal of discussion already.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said he held certain objections to the Bill because several points had not been dealt with, but he would waive his objections and let his friends opposite have absolutely their own sweet way.

Bill reported without Amendment.

MR. CHAPLIN: I beg to move the Third Reading of this Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read for the Third time."

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid): I think it is really too much to ask the House to take the Third Reading of this measure at this late hour.

MR. CHAPLIN: I do not take it that the hon. Member opposite has any intention of opposing the future progress of the Census Bill. To carry out the Census in a proper manner a great deal of time is required, and it is most desirable on every ground that the Bill should become law at the earliest possible moment. Under the circumstances I hope my hon. friend will not object to the Third reading.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I desire to express my regret that the Government have not embodied in this Bill a provision for a quinquennial Census, in favour of which there is a very strong feeling in this House. I shall not repeat to-night the arguments which I placed before the House at some length upon a former occasion. On commercial grounds, in the interests of public health and of municipal government, and upon a great variety of grounds, it has become necessary to civilisation in a country like ours—where changes are so rapid and of so great moment affecting such large interests—that we should have a limited quinquennial Census. I say a limited Census, because we do not desire all the information that is given every ten years, but we do want a Census showing the number, sex, and age of the population. I hope before this debate is concluded we shall have some assurance that this matter will receive the careful consideration of the Government.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I should like to associate myself most fully with the protest which has fallen from the hon. Baronet opposite, and I regret that the Government have not seen their way to adopt his suggestion.

*SIR E. DURNING-LAWRENCE (Cornwall, Truro): I desire to say that my protest would be equally strong if I did not feel that, as certainly as I am standing here, there must be and will be a quinquennial Census.

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I think it would be rather unusual to introduce a Bill five years beforehand.

THE SECRETARY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): This Bill does not prejudge the question of a quinquennial Census at all, and it will be quite open to have such a Census.

Question put, and agreed to. Bill read the Third time, and passed.

CENSUS (IRELAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. T. M. HEALY (LOUTH, N.): I hope the Government will not press this Bill now, but will take the Charitable Loans (Ireland) Bill, which is down on the paper, and which we are all anxious to pass. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman will do this I will undertake to omit a most eloquent speech upon the Census Bill. If he cannot see his way to give this undertaking I shall have to discuss the Census Bill.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): I hope the hon. and learned Member will not press his objection to this Bill, for it is almost identical with the former Bill of 1881. I have always understood that the way in which the last Census was taken gave universal satisfaction. The only new feature in this Bill is a clause in reference to overcrowding and the housing of the working classes. I do not wish to take the Charitable Loans Bill now, because a great many Members who are interested in it are absent.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I regret that the right hon. and learned Gentleman does not see his way to accede to my request. If there is an objection to taking the Charitable Loans Bill on account of the absence of hon. Members, that same objection applies equally to the taking of the Census Bill. A great many people in Ireland have been defrauded in regard to sums invested, and

they cannot get one halfpenny out of the Government. The hon. Gentleman has stated that this is practically the same Bill as the previous one, but in my opinion it introduces important changes. I have always held that a Census Bill is not merely taken for the purpose of enumeration, which is a small matter, but it is taken for the purpose of ascertaining the actual political opinions of the people. Therefore there should be a column for registering and obtaining their opinions on the great political questions which affect the country. I should like to know if it would be in order for me to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

*MR. SPEAKER: No, that motion would not be in order.

MR. ATKINSON: In deference to the hon. and learned Member's objection I will consent to an adjournment.

Debate adjourned till Thursday.

ARMY ANNUAL BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. WARNER: Are there any alterations in this Bill?

*MR. WYNDHAM: There are only two Amendments to the existing law in this Bill. In the first place, section 78 provides that where anyone enlists for one year they shall not be obliged, if they re-engage, to re-engage right up to twelve years. In the second place, under the old Act, the Secretary of State could not restore any service forfeited for certain offences, and he could not restore service in the case of desertion. Under this Act we provide that where a man has been a deserter, and has rejoined and served meritoriously for three years, it shall be competent for the Secretary of State to exercise the prerogative of mercy and allow that service.

MR. CALDWELL: I rise to protest against this Bill being proceeded with. It was said that the Report of Supply was expected to extend over 12 o'clock,

and many hon. Members went away upon the understanding that Supply would take up the whole evening, and that no other Bills would be taken. I protest against the Government pushing through their Bills at ten minutes to twelve when they know that there cannot be that criticism which is absolutely necessary in the interests of the country.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time, and committed for Thursday.

VAGRANTS' CHILDREN PROTECTION BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): The object of this Bill is to prevent Vagrant children being used by tramps and casuals perambulating all parts of the country to provide them with money. This Bill is brought in by the hon. Member for Derby, and is backed by two or three others on the other side of the House. I hope it will not be opposed, but if objection is taken to it upon the ground that it has not been sufficiently considered, I am prepared to put it down for Thursday or Monday next.

Motion made and question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): This Bill affects both the Local Government Board and the Home Office, and it is more of a police measure than anything else. We cannot consider the measure fully until we have had a report from the Home Office, and I should be obliged if the hon. Member will give us a little more time to consider it.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Then I will put it down for Thursday week.

Debate adjourned till Thursday, 29th March.

ROMAN CATHOLIC DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Caldwell.

*MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I hope the House will take the Second Reading of this Bill now. The hon. Member for West Belfast ought to be a strong supporter of religious equality, and this is only a question of equal civil and religious rights to Catholics in Ireland and Great Britain. This Bill simply wants to—

*MR. SPEAKER: I understand the Bill is not printed yet, and it would be contrary to the usual practice to take the Second Reading under these circumstances.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday.

BAKEHOUSES (HOURS OF LABOUR) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."—(Mr. Steadman.)

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): I do not think the hon. Member can expect to get a Bill which proposes to limit the hours of labour to forty-eight per week—and which is to all intents and purposes an eight hours Bill—through in two minutes. He has given us no reason why this Bill should be passed at all. If it is put down for a later day we shall have an opportunity of hearing his reasons for bringing in this Bill. In no industry in England has any legislation been passed which would have the effect of limiting the hours of adult labour.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): What about railway men?

MR. BANBURY: The case is different, because railway men have certain responsibilities put upon them for the safety of the public. This is a totally different thing, for it practically says—

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 20th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN
AND WATERFORD AND CENTRAL
IRELAND RAILWAY COMPANIES
AMALGAMATION BILL [H.L.].

A petition of Messrs. Lewin, Gregory, and Anderson, of No. 6, The Sanctuary, Westminster, parliamentary agents, praying for leave to present a petition of the Right Honourable John Robert William Vesey, Viscount de Vesci, praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill although the time limited by Standing Order No. 92 for presenting such petition has expired; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and Standing Order No. 92 to be considered on Thursday next in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said petition.

PURFLEET AND GRAVESEND JUNC-
TION RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

FISHGUARD WATER AND GAS BILL
[H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 27th of February and on Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed.

GLYNCORRWG URBAN DISTRICT
COUNCIL GAS BILL [H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 26th of February and on Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed.

GLASGOW DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL
[H.L.].LONDON COUNTY TRAMWAYS (No. 1).
CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY.

Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next.

NEWPORT (MONMOUTHSHIRE) GAS
BILL [H.L.].GREAT BERKHAMPSSTEAD WATER
BILL [H.L.].

Reported, with amendments.

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EAST SHROPSHIRE WATER BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

DUNDEE HARBOUR BILL [H.L.].

Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS.

Annual Series: No. 2389. Brazil
(Para, 1898-99).

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896 (ISLE OF
THANET LIGHT RAILWAYS (EXTEN-
SION) ORDER, 1900).

Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of light railways in the boroughs of Ramsgate and Margate in the county of Kent.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

Annual Reports of Proceedings for the year 1899, under—

1. The Diseases of Animals Acts, the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts, etc., etc.;

2. The Tithe Acts, the Copyhold Act, 1894, the Inclosure Acts, the Metropolitan Commons Acts, the Drainage and Improvement of Land Acts, the Universities and College Estates Acts, 1858-1898, the Glebe Lands Act, 1888, etc., etc.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY
(ROYAL COMMISSION).

Appendices to the minutes of evidence and final Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of the water supply within the limits of the Metropolitan Water Companies.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade under the Light Railways Act, 1896, during the year 1899; and of the proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners during the period from the 1st December, 1898, to 31st December, 1899.

NATIONAL DEBT (ANNUITIES).

Account of the gross amount of all bank annuities and any annuities for terms of years transferred, and of all sums of money paid, to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt; and the gross amount of annuities for lives and for terms of years which have been granted for the same, and contracts for payments on death, which have been made within the year ended 5th January, 1900.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 13th March, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the offices of Registrar-General for Ireland, and of Medical Superintendent in the Registrar-General's office, Ireland, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service are requisite.

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with an amendment: The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. [No. 33.]

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM BILL [H.L.].

Read 3^a; amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

CENSUS (GREAT BRITAIN) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Thursday next (The Marquess of Salisbury). [No. 34.]

YEOMANRY—PAY, GRANTS, AND TRAINING.

VISCOUNT GALWAY: My Lords, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can now make a statement about the pay and grants to the Yeomanry; and also what arrangements are proposed for the training this year. I am quite sure my noble friend will understand that my question is put simply with a view of ascertaining, for the information of officers commanding Yeomanry regiments, what arrangements are proposed for this year. Hitherto it has been the custom of most Yeomanry regiments, before this period of the year is reached, to issue the orders for training so that the men may have ample time to make

their arrangements for coming out. The present uncertainty not only prejudices recruiting, but is most disadvantageous. I am glad to note that it is not proposed to make any change in the conditions, drill, and the dress of the Yeomanry pending further reports from South Africa and consultation with the various Colonels of the Yeomanry force. We want to know whether we are to use the carbine or the rifle, and, if the latter, what is the best way of carrying it. No doubt we shall be able to learn many lessons from those who return from the front. Since I placed my question upon the Paper statements have been made in another place by the Under Secretary of State for War with regard to the allowances proposed to be given to the Yeomanry. He stated that the contingent allowance is to be raised from £3 to £5, and that each yeoman who produces a horse at the training is to be given £5. Neither my noble friend nor the country have any wish that Yeomen should be out of pocket as a result of coming out to serve their country during the period of training, but whether the allowance will be adequate for the length of time proposed for training I should not like to say. Twenty-eight days seem a great deal to ask, and I doubt very much whether employers of labour will be willing to allow their men to be away for so long a period. The word "camp" has been mentioned, and also the term "brigade camp." I hope my noble friend will be able to give us a clear explanation as to what is proposed. I do not understand whether each regiment is to go into camp, or whether there is to be an attempt to revive the system of two Yeomanry regiments being brigaded together which was practically abandoned a year or two ago. If there are to be central camps I think it would be only right that the officers commanding the Yeomanry regiments should be consulted by the general officer commanding the district, or the chief officer concerned, as to the most suitable time and place, because it is most important that the men should be able to get away on market days to look after their business with as little inconvenience and as little expense for railway travelling as possible. We should also like information, in connection with the question of camps, with regard to the tents. I have known cases in which camping has been a

very expensive matter to the regiment concerned, and if we are to go into camp I hope some provision will be made for the temporary shelter of our horses. I know it may be met with the answer that on regular service the horse would be picketed out, but it must be remembered that in that case the horses are the property of the Government, and that if they are in any way injured the Government are the losers. In this case, however, the horses are the private property of the men, and as they have been used to stables it is not improbable that they will contract bad chills and other complaints unless provided with stable accommodation. Owing to the fact that many of our officers have gone to the front we who are left behind are very short-handed, and I hope steps will be taken to give us additional assistance *pro tem*. I would suggest that the old system of one adjutant for each regiment should be returned to. I know there is naturally a feeling against seconding more officers from the cavalry for this purpose, but instead of seconding regular officers from the regular cavalry those officers going on retired pay should be sent for five years to the Yeomanry cavalry as adjutants instead of being drafted to the Militia. We all know the deep debt of gratitude we owe to our non-commissioned officers for the way in which they have worked during past years to keep up the organisation of the Yeomanry, and I think some opportunity might be taken this year to recognise their services. I now beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I hope we may within the next few days be able to bring out an Army Order dealing fully with the points to which my noble friend has directed attention. In the meanwhile I am very glad to give him as much information as I can. It is intended this year to invite the Yeomanry to go into camps of instruction in lieu of the ordinary training. We hope that invitation will be responded to in all cases where the regiment is able to comply with the conditions upon which we intend to insist, and which I shall describe presently. With regard to the camps, it is our hope that we may be able to place them where they shall be easily accessible to the regiments concerned, and it will also be a *sine qua non* that they

shall be in places within easy reach of rifle ranges. Musketry will form a conspicuous feature in the training. A scheme, showing how the different regiments are to be allotted to different camps, is under consideration, and will be produced before long. The full period of the duration of the camps will be twenty-eight days, and we propose that each yeoman attending shall be allowed £5 in consideration of his producing a suitable horse, and we also propose that the contingent allowance paid to the corps shall be raised from £3 to £5. But those two concessions will only be made in cases where the regiment is able to fulfil the special conditions. Those conditions are, first, that 50 per cent. of the corps shall be present in camp; secondly, that each man shall put in fourteen days attendance, and that each man shall go through a special musketry course which will be introduced this year. What I am describing has reference entirely to the special camps of instruction for this year, and has no reference to what may happen in years to come. Men will be given travelling allowances from their place of residence to the camp. My noble friend suggested, and I thought with force, that a whole month's attendance in camp was a great deal to expect from the Yeomanry. We intend to allow to the commanding officers a very wide discretion in the matter of leave; we propose that every man should be entitled to leave on full pay for Sundays, and besides that that he should be entitled to one day's leave on full pay in each week during which he is present in camp. The colonel will, of course, have the right of giving extra leave without pay, but it should be clearly understood that leave thus given, whether with or without pay, must not be of such an amount as to bring a man's attendance below the *minimum* of fourteen days. If a man only puts in twelve or thirteen days he then ceases to qualify and to fulfil the conditions indispensable for the higher money grants which I have described. In regard to the corps or men who are unable to put in fourteen days' attendance we propose that they should receive the usual Yeomanry pay, but that they should be allowed if they please to go through the special musketry course, for which, of course, a very much larger grant of ammunition than usual will be made to the regiments. Then as to the training, it is intended that only a few

days, probably about four out of fourteen, shall be devoted to light cavalry training of the kind contemplated in the Yeomanry regulations, but the main object of the training will be practice in dismounted and outpost duties. Those are described in the cavalry drill book, and my noble friend is quite familiar with what I mean. As to the question of training the Yeomanry in brigades we propose that any regiments desiring a longer course of training than that I have indicated should have an opportunity of working in brigades, either in a brigade entirely composed of Yeomanry or if a sufficient number of Yeomanry units are not forthcoming, then in troops or squadrons affiliated to cavalry regiments of the Line. Of course in making this offer we quite understand it may be difficult for many regiments to avail themselves of it. We are perfectly aware that the Yeomanry have parted with a considerable number of men and a still more considerable number of officers, and these probably among the most efficient Yeomanry officers, who have gone to South Africa with the Imperial Yeomanry. It will be, therefore, quite natural if many regiments are unable to go through a long course of training this year, but we do think it desirable that the offer should be made as some corps will, we hope, avail themselves of it. My noble friend said a word about Yeomanry adjutants, and expressed a hope that we might be able to return to the old arrangement, under which each Yeomanry regiment had an adjutant of its own. That, of course, raises a question relating rather to the permanent points that must be reserved for consideration when we come to deal with the more distant future of the Yeomanry force. As to that, I am very far from wishing to anticipate too much, but I think we must all feel that changes in regard to the Yeomanry are in the air, and I gladly repeat to my noble friend what I said the other day—that it is very far from our intention rashly to lay hands on the Yeomanry. To my mind it seems that its future position in the military system can scarcely be satisfactorily determined except after a full inquiry—an inquiry in which Yeomanry officers should bear a part. I think it highly probable that such an inquiry will take place, but I do not think it ought to take place now because I share my noble friend's opinion that we should do well to wait for the experience gained

The Marquess of Lansdowne.

from the service of the Yeomanry in South Africa. I think a number of Yeomanry officers are likely to return with valuable knowledge and experience which we should gladly turn to account in deciding this most important question. I think I have noticed all or most of the points touched upon, but all points of detail will be made clear in the Army order shortly to be issued.

*LORD WINDSOR: My Lords, I should like to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War one or two questions in order to make the points to which he has referred quite clear. The first question I wish to ask is, will these camps be arranged for the Yeomanry, or will the arrangements be left to the individual commanding officers? Secondly, if the right number of men do their fourteen days training under proper conditions and make themselves efficient, will it still be necessary for the whole regiment to remain out twenty-eight days? I do not suggest that it is not right that the regiment should be out the whole time. Personally, I do not look with the slightest alarm at the suggestion that in the future the Yeomanry force may be very greatly altered. But I am glad to hear from the noble Marquess that there is no intention of making a sudden change this year, and that full advantage will be taken of the experience of those who have gone through service in South Africa before the rearrangement of the Yeomanry force is finally determined upon.

LORD CLIFFORD OF CHUDLEIGH: Before the noble Marquess answers the questions which have just been put to him by the noble Lord opposite, I should like to ask whether the War Office Order to which he referred will deal with Volunteers as well as Yeomanry.

LORD NEWTON: I should be glad if the noble Marquess would also tell us if the allowance of £5 for bringing a horse into camp for fourteen days will be free from any conditional claim of the Government upon the horse for the rest of the year. It has been stated, I believe, in the other House, that it is proposed to give commissions in cavalry regiments to Yeomanry officers. Will the noble Marquess tell us if this statement is

correct, and what the proportion of commissions to be granted will be?

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE:** It is our intention to provide camps for the Yeomanry. There may be special cases where the camping arrangements could be better made by commanding officers, and in such cases we should, of course, make special terms with the regiment concerned. I may explain that if 50 per cent. of a regiment go into the camp that 50 per cent. will be entitled to the special terms—£5 for a horse and £5 contingent allowance. If a further number go into camp and are unable to attend for fourteen days they will not get the advantage of the special terms, nor will their presence count towards the 50 per cent. *minimum*. The noble Lord opposite asked me whether the statement I had made had reference to Volunteers as well as to Yeomanry. We are dealing with Volunteers in an analogous manner, but I would prefer to make a statement as to them separately, and if the noble Lord desires information I shall be happy to give it him. My noble friend behind me asks me if the £5 allowance for a horse entails no condition or liability in respect to the animal in the future. That is the case. This year we propose to give £5 for the emergency training, but, as I have said, that is a special arrangement. I must say that if a similar grant is made hereafter, it will, in my opinion, be necessary to have some kind of lien on the horse at other times of the year. We wish to make our proposal as attractive as possible for the present special occasion. And the noble Lord asked whether commissions had been offered to the Yeomanry. Commissions have been offered to them, and I shall be glad if the question is repeated to describe exactly how these commissions are offered and under what conditions; but the matter scarcely comes within the four corners of my noble friend's original question.

VISCOUNT GALWAY: The point I want made quite clear is this. Supposing I am able to take my regiment to camp—say 65 per cent. of my regiment—for fifteen or sixteen days, with one or two days leave, am I at liberty to leave the camp after the 50 per cent. have earned the fourteen days grant? No mention has been made as to the time of the year

at which it is proposed to hold these camps. Perhaps it would be convenient if the officers commanding Yeomanry regiments were consulted as soon as possible on the question.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE:** Fourteen days is the minimum period. If 50 per cent. of any regiment go into camp for fourteen days it earns the special terms. It will be perfectly free to do as many or as few days more duty as it pleases. As to the season of the year at which the camps are to be held, that, I think, is a matter which should be determined after consultation between the military authorities and those concerned. As the noble Lord knows, we have decided to appoint an Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces, who henceforth will be distinct from the Inspector-General of Recruiting, and the presence at the War Office of a high official in that position will, I think, give very great facility in clearing up points of detail.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TELEGRAMS FROM SOLDIERS ON SERVICE.

THE EARL OF LICHFIELD: My Lords, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the reduction of two shillings a word given by the Eastern Telegraph Company for outward messages can be extended to home messages sent by the troops in South Africa.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE:** I am glad to say that the Eastern Telegraph Company have agreed to give the special rate for home messages as well as outward messages.

LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL: I should like to know if this concession of half rate will be extended equally to Her Majesty's Canadian and Australian soldiers and to those from the other outlying parts of the Empire—I hardly care to call them Colonies now—from which contingents have been sent to South Africa. It is just as important to these as to the soldiers from the mother country and their friends that they should have every possible facility for their communications, and I am sure the concession would be greatly appreciated.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE:** I scarcely like to give an answer which

would commit the Eastern Telegraph Company, but I will promise to make inquiries. I think I may say that the Eastern Telegraph Company have shown such a desire to meet the wishes of the service that there is every reason for hoping that, as far as possible, my noble friend's desire may be met.

LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL: If it is met, I hope the arrangements will be made with all the expedition possible.

House adjourned at five minutes past Five of the clock, to Thursday next, at half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 20th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LEE CONSERVANCY BILL.

Ordered, That the Secretary of State for War be at liberty to attend by Counsel and Agent at the next sitting of the Committee on the Lee Conservancy Bill.—(*Mr. Oldroyd.*)

COLONIAL BANK BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

KNOTT END RAILWAY BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

CHRISTCHURCH, BOURNEMOUTH, AND WINTON TRAMWAYS BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I have to ask the House to agree to an Instruction on this Bill similar to one already passed in regard to other Tramway Bills. The clause in this measure regarding the provision of cheap fares for the working classes is very bad; only one car is to be run, and that at an inconvenient hour, and the fares are by no means right. The Instruction has been agreed to by the promoters, and I hope the House will offer no objection to it.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Christchurch,

Bournemouth, and Winton Tramways Bill to consider whether it is desirable to amend Clause 42 (Cheap fares for labouring classes) by inserting penalties to secure the objects of the Clause, and as to the number of the cars to be provided, the hours at which the cars shall run, and the maximum and minimum fares to be charged.—(*Mr. Lough.*)

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE WATER BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

Mr. LEWIS FRY reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills, That, to meet the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Thursday next, at half-past eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

HARBOUR, ETC., BILLS.

Copy ordered, "of the Report of the Board of Trade upon the following Harbour, etc., Bills—

North British Railway Bill [Lords],

Southport and Lytham Tramroad Bill."

—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 106.]

HUDDERSFIELD CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 2).

Mr. JEFFREYS reported from the Committee on Group 2 of Railway Bills, That the parties promoting the Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways Bill had stated that the evidence of George Mark Davidson, Sheriff of the Hamilton district, was essential to their case; and it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said George Mark Davidson do attend the said Committee on Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That George Mark Davidson do attend the Committee on Group 2 of Railway Bills on Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Committee ;

1. "That, in the case of the Central London Railway Petition, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with :—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

2. "That, in the case of Portland Urban District Gas, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with :—That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

3. "That, in the case of the Bray Urban District Council, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with :—That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

4. That, in the case of the London and India Docks Joint Committee Bill, Petition of the 'Urban District Council of Brentford' for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of their Petition against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

5. "That, in the case of the Devonport Corporation Bill, Petition of the 'Devonport Guardians of the Poor' for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of their Petition against the Bill, the said Standing Order not be dispensed with."

First Four Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

DORMANT FUNDS IN CHANCERY
(COURT v. JEFFERY).

Petition of Samuel Stafford for inquiry ; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY (EX-
EMPTION FROM RATES).

Petition from St. Mary, Islington, for alteration of law ; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO
(SCOTLAND BILL).

Petition of the Scottish Sabbath Protection Association, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS'
SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Woodhall Spa, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON
SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Portsmouth ; Sandown (two) ; and, Stockport ; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO
CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Birmingham ; Ashbourne ; Stockport ; Burnley ; Bridgewater ; Dulwich ; and Battersea Rise (two) ; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO
CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Eccles, in favour, and against corporal punishment for Youthful Offenders ; to lie upon the Table.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS (LONDON)
BILL.

Petition from St. Giles' District, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE)
BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Ryde ; Englefield Green ; West Ham ; Stretford ; Sheffield ; Wymondham ; Birmingham ; Forest Gate ; and London ; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATIONAL DEBT ANNUITIES.

Account presented, of the 'Gross Amount of all Bank Annuities and any Annuities for terms of years transferred, and of all Sums of Money paid to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, and the Gross Amount of Annuities for Lives and for terms of Years, etc., granted within the year ended 5th January, 1900 [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 103.]

SUPERANNUATIONS.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 13th March, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the offices of Registrar General for Ireland, and of Medical Superintendent in the Registrar General's Office, Ireland, professional or other peculiar

qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are requisite [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES).

Annual Account presented, for the year 1898-99, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 104.]

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the boroughs of Ramsgate and Margate, in the county of Kent (Isle of Thanet Light Railways (Extensions) Order, 1900) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Trade during the year 1899, and of the proceedings of the Light Railways Commissioners during the period from the 1st December, 1898, to the 31st December, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table; and to be printed. [No. 105.]

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

Copy presented, of Annual Report of Proceedings under the Tithe Acts, Copyhold Act, 1894, Inclosure Acts, and other Acts, for the year 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

Copy presented, of Annual Reports of Proceedings under the Diseases of Animals Acts, the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts, &c., for the year 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896.

Copy presented, of an Order dated 14th March, 1900, relating to the conveyance of animals by the steamship "Aldworth" [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence and Final Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed

to inquire into the subject of the Water Supply within the limits of the Metropolitan Water Companies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of Statement showing (1) the Expenditure from the Grant for Public Education in England and Wales in the year 1899, and Expenditure from 1839 to 1899; (2) the number of Public Elementary Day Schools on the Annual Grant List on the 31st August, 1899, etc.; (3) Detailed Statistics of Inspected Schools, 1898-9, Public Elementary Day Schools, Evening Continuation Schools, and Certified Efficient Schools, etc.; (4) Summary Tables of Educational Statistics; and (5) Number of School Boards under various heads of Population [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—DEFENCE OF LADYSMITH—PROPOSED PUBLIC RECEPTION OF NAVAL BRIGADE.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether on the arrival of the Naval officers and men who took such a part in the defence of Ladysmith, he will afford the inhabitants of London an opportunity of giving them a public reception, and thus expressing their admiration and gratitude.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): My right hon. friend asks me to say that no definite announcement can be made, but it is under consideration to have an inspection of the Naval Brigade by the Lords of the Admiralty in London.

BOER DISREGARD OF RULES OF WAR—THREATENED DESTRUCTION OF JOHANNESBURG.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether a threat was made by the Boers to level or burn down Johannesburg; and if so, whether the Boers were informed that any wanton destruction of British property during the war would be charged to the Boers and the amount levied on their farms and other property.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The questions raised are outside the province of the War Office. I understand, however, that the Colonial Secretary intends to issue a proclamation on the subject.

EXETER HOSPITAL—OFFERS FOR WOUNDED SOLDIERS.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for War when it will be possible to give a decided answer to the offer made on 21st December last by the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital to take in twenty sick and wounded men of the Devon Regiment on their return from active service.

*MR. WYNDHAM: There has been some misapprehension on this point, and I should like, if the House will allow me, to explain it rather fully. It was apprehended that the accommodation of the military hospitals might prove insufficient for the number of invalids arriving from South Africa. A circular was accordingly sent by the War Office to the various town and country hospitals to ascertain what number of beds could, if need should arise, be assigned to military patients. Our intention is to use these beds only as a reserve, when the military hospitals are full. In many cases, including the Royal Devon and Exeter, we were met by the generous offer of a number of free beds. But the military hospitals are not yet full; only about 2,000 invalids have so far arrived from South Africa, and many of these have already been sent on sick furlough; so that it is impossible to say when, or whether, recourse must be had to civil hospitals. There is, however, no necessity for keeping beds vacant in any civil hospital, since we propose to give ten days' or a fortnight's notice in every case.

HOSPITAL STORES—TENDERS FOR WINES.

MR. LODER (Brighton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether wines are included among the hospital stores sent to South Africa; and whether tenders are invited for these wines; if so, whether tenders for Cape wines as well as foreign wines are called for.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Champagne and port are sent for hospital use. Tenders are invited for them. Tenders for Cape

wines are not called for, but if any should be required by the medical officers purchase could be made on the spot.

COURTS MARTIAL IN SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. H. D. GREENE (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any and what sum has been allocated in these Estimates in respect of the expenses of courts martial in South Africa, and the payment of the Deputy Judge Advocate; and whether he can state the number of records of courts martial which have been remitted to the Judge Advocate General's Department in England from South Africa since the commencement of the war, and the name and standing of the legal adviser of the Acting Deputy Judge Advocate in South Africa; and whether courts martial, in all departments of Her Majesty's military and naval forces serving on land, including colonial contingents, are directed by one Deputy Judge Advocate in South Africa.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Provision for the expenses referred to in paragraph 1 has been made under Vote 1, sub-head A., for extra expenditure, occasioned by the war in South Africa. Since the commencement of the war the records of 458 courts martial have been sent to England. The Deputy Judge Advocate in South Africa is a barrister of nine years standing and has no legal adviser. Courts martial in all departments of the military forces in South Africa, including colonial contingents, are directed by the Deputy Judge Advocate—courts martial on Naval forces are outside his jurisdiction.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomery): Do the figures include courts martial held under martial law on persons not serving Her Majesty in South Africa?

[No answer was returned.]

MAGAZINE RIFLES.

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War the reasons inducing the War Office to prefer arrangements for loading in connection with the service rifle which necessitate the refilling of the magazine by the insertion of a single cartridge at a time to arrangements which enable the whole magazine to be recharged by a single movement of the hand, as in the case of the rifle in use by the Boers.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The present magazine rifle was adopted into the service on the recommendation of a special Small Arms Committee after trials had been carried out with all available magazine rifles. It would be impossible within the limits of an answer to recapitulate the reasons which led to the decision arrived at.

MILITIA EMBODIMENT—EXPENSES OF STATION CHANGES.

MR. YERBURGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the officers and men of the militia regiments, which have been embodied and sent to take the place of regulars in garrison, have been put to serious expense, which many of them can ill-afford; and that, in consequence, while they are anxious to go to the front, and prepared to take their place in manœuvre camps, they are desirous not to be called upon to incur the charges which a change from one home station to another would entail upon them; and whether he can meet the wishes of these officers and men.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The Secretary of State for War is not aware of any complaints on the matter. He fully admits the necessity of putting the units concerned to as little inconvenience as possible, but he cannot undertake to promise that Militia regiments shall not be moved.

TRANSPORT—THE "AMERICA."

MR. CUBITT (Surrey, Reigate): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what was the percentage of losses in horses on the transport "America" on her first voyage to the Cape; whether, upon her arrival at Southampton last week from Glasgow, where she had embarked horses for a second voyage, there was so much sickness among the horses that all had to be disembarked; and, whether it is intended to re-embark these horses on the same ship together with others, and if so, if he can state when the vessel will sail.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The "America," a vessel of 5,158 tons, carrying 276 horses, has made two voyages to the Cape; on the first the losses were 4 per cent., on the second 24 per cent., owing to heavy weather at starting. No

complaints of any moment have been received in regard to her. About half the horses for conveyance on her third voyage (Lord Lovat's Corps) were embarked at Glasgow, and on the voyage to Southampton pink eye broke out among them, rendering it necessary to land them at Southampton and disinfect the ship. The outbreak was in no way due to the transport, and it is proposed by the War Office to embark other horses as soon as the ship is ready to receive them. The date of sailing cannot yet be fixed.

ARMY PAY—THREE-YEAR MEN.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Government have now decided if the three-year men enlisted for the Army are to have the extra 3d. of pay recently granted to men enlisted on longer terms, and now extended to the Militia.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir. Three-years men will have the messing allowance issued to them on the same terms as other soldiers.

WORCESTERSHIRE AND MANCHESTER REGIMENTS.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War where the third and fourth battalions respectively of the Worcestershire and Manchester Regiments were raised; where they are now stationed; what is the strength of each battalion; what number of men in each battalion are effective soldiers, and of age and physique for foreign service; and whether there are any, and if so what, number in each battalion of non-effectives left behind when the first and second battalions went on active service.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The battalions referred to are at Aldershot. Their formation has only just begun, and they probably do not yet number 100 men apiece. If my hon. and gallant friend will repeat his question later in the session I shall be happy to tell him what progress has been made.

ENLISTMENT OF WARDS IN CHANCERY.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in the case of an infant, being a ward in Chancery, enlist-

ing in the Army, and his discharge being demanded by the Court of Chancery, the War Office would discharge him.

*MR. WYNDHAM: A Ward in Chancery has, in regard to enlistment, no status differing from that of anyone else.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is it not the case that the Court of Chancery possesses more authority over boys than their parents? Why do the War Office refuse to parents what they concede to the Court of Chancery?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I am not aware that they do.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: What is the law with regard to the enlistment of infants?

[No answer was given.]

VOLUNTEERS IN THE ORDNANCE SURVEY OFFICE.

SIR BARRINGTON SIMEON (Southampton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, when the presence of men engaged in the Ordnance Survey Offices, who are members of the Volunteer Forces, is annually required in camp in order to promote efficiency, leave of absence is granted to them with the stipulation that they must make up the time lost; and, if so, whether, should the camp last for a fortnight as is probable this year, these employees will be necessarily engaged at work for an additional two hours per day for forty-four days to make up the lost time; and whether steps may be taken at once to place these men on the same footing as those employed by private individuals, who almost without exception grant the necessary leave of absence without deduction of pay.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): The practice of the Ordnance Survey is substantially as stated by my hon. friend. The question whether Volunteers employed in the Government service on weekly wages should receive their civil pay when in camp or otherwise engaged on Volunteer duty is one which obviously should not be settled by reference to any particular Department alone, and I propose to bring the matter under the notice of my right hon. friend, with a

view to ascertain what is the practice elsewhere and what are the wishes of the Treasury respecting it. My hon. friend will understand that whenever civil assistants desire to devote their ordinary leave of absence to Volunteer work, every facility is given to enable them to do so.

BERMUDA DOCK.

MR. W. ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty what progress is being made with the new floating dock for Bermuda, and when it will be at work.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The dredging of the berth for the floating dock is proceeding, and some other preliminary work has been done. Plans and drawings for the dock and basins are now under consideration. The whole should be finished by the date given in the Schedule to the Naval Works Act, 1899.

AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES — PENNY POST.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it is proposed to take advantage of the presence of the Australian Federal Delegates in London to have an informal consultation, with a view to the extension of the penny postal system to Australia as soon as possible after the establishment of the Commonwealth.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The delegates are not, I understand, authorised to discuss such a question as the extension of the penny postal system to Australia.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN EXPENDITURE.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is now in a position to state definitely when the Reports of the Royal Commission upon Indian Expenditure will be laid upon the Table.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I am informed that the Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure is complete, and has been approved by a majority of members. But

other members have signified their intention of recording their opinions, and these are not yet ready. There is, however, every reason to expect that the Report, with the usual supplements and appendages, will be laid upon the Table shortly.

**PERSIA—CUSTOM HOUSE CLAIMS
OF BRITISH MERCHANTS.**

MR. YERBURGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to the undisputed claims of British merchants against the Persian Custom House remaining unredressed for more than two years; and whether, as such treatment prejudices British commerce and influence in that region, he will instruct our Minister at Teheran to take such steps as may be necessary to effect a speedy settlement of the matter.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): It is presumed the question relates to the claims of Messrs. Sassoon and Company, as to which correspondence has been recently going on, and hopes have been held out that they will be settled before the end of the present month.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ABROAD.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE (London-derry): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs why the Papers on the subject of University Education Abroad, promised for the beginning of this week, are still delayed; and whether he is aware that there is great interest taken in the production of these Papers in view of the discussion on this subject next Friday.

*MR. BRODRICK: Papers will be laid to-day and distributed to-morrow.

**CIUDAD BOLIVAR CONSULATE—MR.
LYALL'S MURDER.**

MR. H. P. PEASE (Darlington): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been called to the recent murder of Mr. James Lyall, of Darlington, who has been in the service of the British Consulate at Ciudad Bolivar; and whether the Government will make full investigation in regard to the circumstances.

*MR. BRODRICK: The murder of Mr. James Lyall has been reported by the British Consul at Ciudad Bolivar. The matter has been placed in the hands of Her Majesty's Minister at Caracas, whose report there has not yet been time to receive. Full investigation into the circumstances will certainly be made.

**AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL—
SUGGESTED SEPARATE BILL FOR
SCOTLAND.**

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in consideration of the wide difference of agricultural custom and nomenclature between England and Scotland, he will follow the precedent of 1882, and introduce a separate Agricultural Holdings Bill for Scotland.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester E.): This was carefully considered by the Agricultural Department, in consultation with the Scottish Office. They came to the conclusion that the course actually pursued was the most convenient, and would lead to no difficulty or confusion.

DR. FARQUHARSON: If the right hon. Gentleman is not able to pursue this course, may I ask whether he will issue an intelligible translation of the Bill for the information of the Scottish members?

[No answer was given.]

TIUMPAN HEAD LIGHTHOUSE.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state what progress has been made with the erection of the lighthouse at Tiumpan Head, and when does he expect it to be completed.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am informed by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses that the tower of Tiumpan Head Lighthouse is practically completed, and that it is expected that the light will be exhibited before the end of the summer.

**THEATRE REGULATIONS—BLOCKED
GANGWAYS.**

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the regulations

forbidding the blocking of gangways in theatres and other places of public amusement are being ignored, and that it has become a regular practice to place the seats so close together as to preclude the possibility of their occupants getting out in case of emergency; and whether, having regard to recent examples of the rapidity with which theatres are destroyed by fire, he can take any steps to enforce the strict observance of the precautionary regulations.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have made inquiry into this matter so far as concerns the Metropolis. I find that a strict observance of the regulations referred to is constantly enjoined on managers, and I have no reason to believe that they are being ignored. If the hon. Member will bring any specific complaint on the subject to the notice of the Lord Chamberlain or of the London County Council, he may be assured that immediate steps will be taken.

FACTORY ACTS—EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can lay upon the Table of the House extracts from the Reports of the factory inspectors between 1838 and 1850 on the results of allowing the employment in factories of women and young persons from 5.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. (the so-called relay system); and whether he will also cause to be reprinted and laid upon the Table the Reports of the present factory inspectors relating to the difficulty of enforcing the legal limitation of hours in laundries and non-textile factories and workshops, where the hours of beginning and ending work are not fixed so as to coincide precisely with the legal period of employment.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: It is not usual to compile and reprint at the public expense extracts from such Reports for any particular purpose, and I am afraid I cannot undertake to do as the hon. Member suggests.

EXAMINATION OF OMNIBUS TICKETS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in

view of the fact that omnibus conductors are not empowered by law to demand payment of the fare before the termination of the journey, will he state whether any steps can be taken to obviate the annoyance to passengers caused by the entering an omnibus, by ticket inspectors, which already contains its full complement of persons.

SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I must refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave to the hon. Member for North Donegal on the 5th inst., to the effect that I have no power to interfere with this practice.* I may add that I do not wish to be taken as accepting as a fact the view of the law expressed in the question.

FLOGGING—REMISSIONS OF SENTENCES.

MR. H. D. GREENE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the dates and places when and where the five sentences of flogging were passed which in 1899 were wholly or partly remitted; whether he will state in each case the full sentence ordered and the sentence actually inflicted or served and the grounds for such remission, and whether upon grounds of law or mercy; and whether such remissions were upon the initiative of any and what official, or individual, or society.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: On February 6th, at the Central Criminal Court, a sentence of twenty strokes and nine months with hard labour was ordered; the prisoner was discharged at the end of eight weeks and the flogging was not inflicted. On February 13th, at Liverpool assizes, a sentence of twenty strokes twice and four months with hard labour was ordered; twenty strokes were inflicted and four months served. At the same time and place a sentence of fifteen strokes thrice and six months with hard labour was ordered; thirty strokes were inflicted and six months served. At the same time and place a sentence of fifteen strokes twice and three months with hard labour was ordered; fifteen strokes were inflicted and three months served. On June 26th, at the Central Criminal Court, a sentence of twenty strokes and three years penal servitude was ordered the flogging was not inflicted, the prisoner

is serving his sentence. It has always been my practice and that of my predecessors to deprecate inquiry in Parliament as to the grounds on which the exercise of the prerogative is advised. It would also be contrary to practice to give information about communications addressed to me.

TELEPHONING TELEGRAMS.

MR. HAZELL (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that it has been the custom for post offices to telephone telegrams whenever a telephone apparatus is available instead of delivering by hand, and to forward the written telegram by the next postal delivery; whether, by recent instructions, postmasters have been ordered not to deliver written telegrams in addition to telephoning them; why was the system altered; and is he aware that dependence upon the telephone only is liable to error in certain classes of messages, and will he give instructions that the former system shall be resumed

MR. HANBURY: The custom mentioned in the first paragraph has not been the rule. The general rule has been to give delivery by telephone in lieu of other delivery; but, to meet special requirements, the Postmaster General some time ago arranged that any addressee might have each morning in a single express letter, paid for at the usual rate, copies of all telegrams delivered by telephone on the previous day. This arrangement is still in force. If the hon. Member will send to the Postmaster General particulars of the case he has in view, inquiry shall be made as to the circumstances. Special precautions are taken to prevent errors in the delivery of telegrams by telephone, and as a matter of fact the cases of such errors are very few. Delivery by telephone is entirely optional, and is given in all cases at the special request of the addressees.

TUBERCULOSIS—COMPENSATION FOR CONFISCATION.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has had any communication with the Smithfield Club, the Highland Society, the Chambers of Agriculture, or other associations, which

passed resolutions in favour of compensation for tuberculosis confiscations; whether the Government have considered the subject; and whether it is intended to introduce legislation this session.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The reply to the first two paragraphs of the question is in the affirmative. It is not proposed to introduce legislation on the subject this session.

LAND REGISTRY OFFICE.

MR. LODER: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether it is proposed to introduce a Bill to enable the Government to purchase land for the purpose of erecting a permanent Land Registry Office; whether it was stated at the time of the Land Transfer Act that its operations should be experimental for some years; and whether in these circumstances the Government will postpone the erection of offices until a larger experience of the working of the Act has been enjoyed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): The question is put under a misapprehension. New buildings are required for the Land Registry quite independently of the Land Transfer Act.

SMALL HOLDINGS IN THE ISLAND OF BERNERA.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, seeing that last summer the Congested Districts Board had under consideration proposals for the creation of small holdings in the island of Bernera, will he state what progress has been made with the scheme.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The Congested Districts Board hope soon to announce that the scheme has been carried out by the settlement of twenty-four crofters, with entry at Whit Sunday.

BEE-KEEPING IN SCOTLAND.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate what progress has been made with the scheme for the encouragement of bee-keeping in the congested area of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; and will he say how many hives have

been distributed and to what districts they have been sent.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: It has been found difficult to find crofters willing to devote attention to bee-keeping. Last spring three hives were sent to the Isle of Coll, where they have done well. Six hives are now about to be sent to Sutherlandshire. The Congested Districts Board would be only too glad if crofters would interest themselves in the subject.

In reply to a further question by Mr. WEIR,

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY said: If the hon. Member will give me the names of any of his acquaintances who take an interest in bees—either in the bonnet or otherwise—I will certainly send them a hive.

PORT NESS HARBOUR WORKS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state whether there is any prospect of the Port Ness Harbour Works being completed this summer.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: There is at present no intention of spending any more money on Port Ness Harbour.

MR. WEIR: Will the funds now in the hands of the Scottish Office be expended on this harbour?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I have told the hon. Member there is no intention of spending any more money on the harbour.

STORNOWAY MAIL BOAT.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, having regard to the fact that the packet services on the west coast of Scotland are stated by the Postmaster General, under letter dated 9th June, 1899, to have been established in order to afford facilities for trade and passengers, as well as to provide for the conveyance of the mails, and seeing that the boat which conveys the mails between Kyle of Lochalsh and Stornoway is forty years old, and provides most inadequate accommodation, will he consider the expediency of arranging for a more modern boat to be placed on the service.

MR. HANBURY: Although in the letter quoted by the hon. Member reference was made to facilities for passengers, it is hardly the province of the Post Office to call upon the contractor to provide improved passenger accommodation. The contractor would no doubt demand an increased subsidy if he were requested to supply a more modern boat for the Kyle and Stornoway service, and in view of the loss already incurred in connection with this service, the Postmaster General regrets that he does not see his way to take any steps in the direction indicated. It is understood that the boat usually employed in the service is nearly forty years old, but that she was lengthened and fitted with new engines a few years ago, and is regarded as a good sea boat. It is stated that she is certified to be capable of conveying 360 passengers, with sleeping accommodation for forty-seven. The average number of passengers during the last twelve months was about twenty-five a day in each direction.

FINE OR IMPRISONMENT (SCOTLAND AND IRELAND) ACT, 1899.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgetown): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, whether the provisions of The Fine or Imprisonment (Scotland and Ireland) Act, 1899, have yet come into operation in Ireland; and, what steps have been taken, or are proposed to be taken, to make known its provisions to prisoners committed in default of payment of fines.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The Statute referred to will become operative in Ireland when the General Prisons Board are informed that the Rules framed under the Act, which were laid on the Tables of both Houses of Parliament on the 5th February ultimo, have been laid before each House for a period of forty days. The Board have been informed that the Rules have been laid before this House for the prescribed period, and as soon as they receive a similar notification from the authorities of the other House, a circular will at once be issued to governors of prisons directing them to see that every prisoner to whom the Act applies is, without delay, made fully aware of its provisions.

IRISH FINANCIAL RELATIONS—GOVERNMENT STORES—COMPARATIVE OUTLAY IN THE THREE KINGDOMS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, if he will sanction a Return showing the comparative outlay in England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively on foot of Government stores and supplies purchased since the beginning of the current financial year, April 1st, 1899, to present time, in view of the importance of this information in its bearing on the question of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, which is down for discussion on an early date.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am unable to give the information in a detailed or complete form, but such information as I have is at the disposal of the hon. Gentleman. I cannot give it for the year, but only since the war began. I am informed that the value of clothing ordered from Ireland amounts to £113,000 out of a total of £580,000. The value of Irish orders for linen is £20,000 out of £84,000, and of cordite £9,166 out of a total value of £117,000. I ought to say that is for the Army alone, and that the Irish share of cordite for the Army and Navy together may be regarded as about one-third of the total supply. The only remaining item of importance is stout, which has been entirely ordered from Ireland.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I wish to ask, can the right hon. Gentleman give similar figures with regard to the neglected and benighted country of Scotland, which, I am afraid, has not received much attention.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, Sir, Scotland never puts in the same kind of claim as Ireland. As the right hon. Gentleman is aware, we take a different view of the relations between the various parts of the United Kingdom.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say how much Scotch whisky is ordered?

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Are we to understand that of all the millions spent in the course of this war the total sum expended in Ireland has been £130,000?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. The hon. Gentleman is to understand nothing but exactly what I have told him—namely, that of a particular supply ordered the amount sent has been what I have stated. We cannot order guns and armour plate in Ireland, because they are not made there.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Nothing but men from Ireland.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Is it not the fact that the cloth is made in England, and all that Ireland does is to stitch up the clothes?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should think that is not so, but I must not be subjected to cross-examination. I have collected as rapidly as I could such information as was available, and I cannot answer supplementary questions.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us how many generals come from Ireland?

[No answer was given.]

REGULATIONS AS TO THE LANDING IN GREAT BRITAIN OF DOGS FROM IRELAND.

MR. ENGLEDEW (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether greyhounds, dancing and performing dogs are allowed to cross backwards and forwards between England and Ireland, while sheep dogs, sporting dogs, and dogs coming or going to attend dog shows are not allowed the same privileges; and whether he will consider the justice of making one uniform rule in all such cases providing such safeguards as he may think necessary.

*MR. LONG: The conditions under which dogs are allowed to be brought into Great Britain from Ireland have been somewhat modified in the case of coursing greyhounds and performing dogs, in order to avoid particular hardships which would otherwise have arisen, but it is not correct to say that they are allowed to cross backwards and forwards between the two countries. The propriety of the continuance of the concession is now under consideration, but if any alteration of the present practice is to be made it must be in the direction of the application to such dogs of the rules ordinarily enforced for

the purpose of preventing the introduction of rabies into Great Britain.

IRISH RAILWAYS—ROSSLARE-WATERFORD LINE.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can give the name of the contractor who is alleged to have been engaged to construct a line of railway between Rosslare or Wexford and Waterford, the exact date upon which the contract was signed, and the date fixed in the contract for the completion of the work.

MR. HANBURY: The contract, which, as I stated on Friday, is only for about twenty-one miles of the line, has been concluded with Messrs. McAlpine and Sons, of Glasgow. I do not know the exact date on which it was signed, but I understand that the works are to be completed by 30th June, 1903.

DUBLIN REGISTRAR GENERAL'S OFFICE—MEDICAL REFEREE.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to institute the office of Medical Referee to the Registrar General's office in Dublin, and what are to be the duties and emoluments of the appointment.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): It is proposed to appoint a medical man to the office of Superintendent at present vacant in the department of the Registrar General. The salary attached to the post will be £350, rising by £15 annually to £500. The duties of the officer will be those generally of a superintendent, but particularly with regard to the preparation of vital statistics.

SHILLELAGH UNION HOSPITAL NURSES.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board sanction the appointment of temporary nurses with only one year's training; if so, on what ground do the Board decline to recommend the Government to recoup the Shillelagh Guardians half the salary which they paid to nurse Young as a temporary nurse in the Shillelagh Union Hospital.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The Local Government Board,

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upon the requisition of the medical officer of the Shillelagh Workhouse, offered no objection to the employment, as a purely temporary measure, of a night nurse with only one year's training. But the Board refused to refund half the salary paid to a Miss Young, who had been employed temporarily in this capacity, until they received from her the necessary evidence of her qualifications, and this evidence Miss Young, though applied to on the subject, has omitted to furnish.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many cases there are in the Shillelagh Workhouse Infirmary that require special treatment by a trained nurse; and is the number above the weekly average; and, if so, is the excess due to an increase in the number of influenza patients, or to any other cause.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): I am informed there are at present forty-six patients in this workhouse hospital, and that of these twenty-two require special nursing. The number of sick now in the hospital is somewhat below the average.

THE IRISH FLAG ON IRISH COURT-HOUSES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the fact that on St. Patrick's Day last Irish flags were flying from Windsor Castle, Dublin Castle, London Mansion House, and the municipal buildings of Liverpool and other provincial English cities and towns, the Irish Government will now permit Irish County Councils to hoist the Irish National flag on Irish courthouses used by them as their places of meeting for the discharge of public business.

MR. ATKINSON: I am not aware whether flags were erected or not on all the buildings mentioned, or whether the flags erected were similar to those proposed to be erected on Irish Court-houses. It is a matter in each case for the consideration of the high sheriffs, who generally have determined, in my opinion wisely, that it was undesirable that Court-houses, primarily erected for the purposes of the administration of justice, should

be associated with political or party displays of any kind or character.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman describe the kind of flag he objects to?

MR. ATKINSON: I do not know what flags were used.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I thought not.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Were the Court-houses built at the expense of the high sheriffs or of the ratepayers of the county?

[No answer was given.]

THE IRISH CENSUS.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether it is intended to have the work of taking the Irish census carried out under similar regulations to those operating in the English census office; whether census enumerators will be taken from civilians; and whether the patronage system of task-work to Government clerks in Ireland will be discontinued and an adequate staff, with pay equal to the English employees, will be employed at Charlemont House.

MR. ATKINSON: It is not intended to have the work of taking the Irish census carried out under regulations similar to those operating in the English census office as the work of the two Departments is entirely different. Since 1841 the enumerators employed in Ireland have all been members of the Royal Irish Constabulary or Dublin Metropolitan Police, and it is not proposed to depart from this practice on the present occasion. The officials in the Department of the Registrar General who, from their training, are specially qualified to be employed on task-work, will continue to be so employed. In addition to these a number of male and female outdoor task-workers will also be appointed by the Lord Lieutenant. The rates of pay in 1881 and 1891 were found sufficient to secure a competent staff and the same rates will be paid on the occasion of the forthcoming census.

INEBRIATES ACT IN IRELAND.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney

General for Ireland if his attention has been called to a statement made by the Rev. John Gleeson, P.P., in which he refers to an alleged failure of the Inebriates Act in Ireland; whether he is aware, at a case tried at Roscrea, county Tipperary, in the spring of this year, such a failure occurred; and whether, if it should prove necessary, he will take steps to have the Act amended.

MR. ATKINSON: My attention has been called to a letter of the Rev. Mr. Gleeson, published in the press, in which it is stated that a person cannot be committed to an inebriate reformatory unless he or she be found to be suffering from bodily infirmity. This view is quite erroneous; there is no such requirement in the Statute. The Government have provided a State reformatory for every inebriate who has been convicted of an indictable offence. The power of providing reformatories for habitual drunkards who have not been so convicted is, by the 5th and 9th sections of the Act, conferred upon the county and borough councils and private individuals, not on the executive. The Treasury are empowered to make a weekly grant in aid of 10s. 6d. in respect of each inmate so committed. I regret to say that most, if not all, of the councils have failed to put these powers in force. This is the real cause of any failure that has arisen in the administration of the Act.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury if it has been finally arranged that the discussion on the Roman Catholic University question shall be taken on Friday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not quite sure that it rests with me to determine. The actual motion before the House will be "that the Speaker do now leave the Chair." There is a general understanding in the House that the topic to be discussed on that motion will be that relating to a Roman Catholic University for Ireland; but, of course, I am not able to ensure that that subject will be brought on. I may say now that tomorrow the first Order will be the Committee stage of the Ways and Means Bill—a purely formal matter.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Will the Committee stage of the Finance Bill be taken on Monday next?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope so.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

SIR ROBERT GREY CORNISH MOWBRAY, Baronet, for Borough of Lambeth (Brixton Division).

JOHN O'DOWD, Esquire, County of Sligo (North Sligo Division).

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures—Lord Balcarras—and had appointed in substitution Mr. Maclean.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

War Loan Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Rural Council of Wharfedale to purchase the undertaking of the Menstone Waterworks Company; and for other purposes." [Menstone Water (Transfer) Bill [*Lords*].

MENSTONE WATER (TRANSFER) BILL [H.L.].

Read for the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

NEW BILL.

INCEST.

Bill to provide for the punishment of the crime of Incest, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Dalbiac, Mr. Robert Cameron, Mr. Whittaker, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, Sir John Kennaway, and Mr. Henry Wilson.

INCEST BILL.

"To provide for the punishment of the crime of Incest," presented accordingly,

and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 9th May, and to be printed. [Bill 136.]

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I think this would be a convenient occasion to call attention to a matter which has of late engaged much public attention, namely, the question of defrauding War Office contractors and the method in which they are dealt with by the Department. The House is being asked to vote large sums of money raised by taxation mainly to meet the requirements of the war, and it is important to know whether proper steps are taken to protect supreme national interests. The other day a Return was moved for in regard to contractors struck off the War Office list for misconduct, but the way in which that Return was worded, as I ventured to say at the time, was scarcely calculated to afford the House the full information which it desires. It was so worded as to merely give the names of contractors struck off the Government list for misconduct in connection with the supply of stores for the use of our field forces in South Africa, and also the names of officers no longer employed by the Government who had passed those defective stores. Under the head of "Contractors who have been struck off the Government list for misconduct in connection with the sending of stores for the use of Her Majesty's field force in South Africa," the information given is singularly meagre. Two names—Messrs. John E. Bennett and Sons and Mr. John Brown—with the addresses are given; but that does not carry the House very far. It did not enlighten us much, but subsequent investigation pointed to a good deal that was behind. It turns out that the business of Messrs. Bennett and Sons was really conducted by a person called Underwood, who was an old offender, having some years ago been guilty of the grave offence of supplying bad hay for the consumption of the forces. The firm of Underwood

was then very properly removed from the War Office list; and that might be supposed to be a heavy penalty. Indeed, an indignant country was left with the impression that persons caught red-handed in a serious offence would never again have an opportunity of plundering the taxpayers and endangering the safety of the forces. But this firm, finding themselves excluded from the privilege of supplying bad hay, thought it would be a good idea to connect themselves with another firm already figuring on the War Office list. They therefore acquired the business of another firm which had the privilege of supplying the War Office; and they were again caught red-handed in supplying defective stores. These facts ought to have appeared in the Return. If the form of Return which I suggested had been adopted, and the Christian names, surnames, and addresses of all the directors of the firms concerned had been given, the House would have had before it the facts which I think have been most improperly concealed. I do not make any charge against the Financial Secretary, though I do think he should have brought the Return up to date and should have granted my Return, which would have prevented him being the victim of this imposture, and would not have led him to deceive Parliament. I fear that persons other than those whose names appear in the Return are gravely compromised. This firm has got back on the list of contractors by a barefaced trick which ought not to have deceived anyone. Whose business was it to see that they should not get back under an *alias* of this kind? Is it or is it not the case that the business has been conducted in the old premises whence previous frauds had emanated? This has been stated to be the case, but I scarcely think it to be likely, for I think the War Office official responsible in the matter would have felt it his duty to report such a glaring imposition to his superiors. It may be, however, that the officers whose duty it was to see to this matter had some relations with this person. In 1888 the attention of the House was called to the case of a contractor who had been guilty of gross frauds in connection with the supply of leather. He, too, seems to have been taken back again, because the boots supplied to the troops in South Africa are of the most scandalous description.

Mr. James Lowther.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham S.): No.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Is it or is it not the case that the firm of Ross and Co. was struck off the list in 1888? In 1894 the Leader of the Opposition was asked whether he would restore Messrs. Ross and Co. to the list of contractors entitled to supply the War Office. A gentleman named Tomlin was mentioned in connection with the business, and he was really the person who conducted it. The right hon. Gentleman, properly as I think, declined to restore the name of the firm to the list, and he pointed out it was a very gross offence. The firm had been detected red-handed in dishonest practices which were injurious to the public service, and he said he could not restore their names to the list. I would like to ask whether that firm is employed now? The Financial Secretary says the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling Burghs stated that they could not be restored to the list "at present." I suppose he thinks that sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. I have been told that Mr. Tomlin's firm was again employed. Perhaps this case is like that of Mr. Underwood and Mr. Bennett. The partners of the firm, having been caught, probably thought it prudent to make some pretence of retiring. They probably assigned their interests for a valuable consideration to persons whose withers were unwrung so far as the Department was concerned. The difficulty of detecting these frauds is very great. Messrs. Ross and Co. took precautions to prevent the public conscience from being again offended by revelations of this kind, for they succeeded in obtaining the position of the viewer or inspector of the goods they supplied for a man who belonged to their own firm; practically the officers of the Department were ex-employees of their own. Is that the case now? Have they brought back with them their viewers to relieve the War Office of the invidious task of selecting persons to see that they are not again robbed by persons caught red-handed in the act on a previous occasion? The Return which has been supplied is worded in the most restricted manner. It speaks of officers no longer employed by the Government, but, on the other hand, I asked for the names and

the ranks of the officers responsible for passing the defective goods. The narrow limits which have been imposed on the Return leave a suspicion in the public mind that there is a great deal more behind. The manner in which these serious charges have been met is not calculated to disarm the grave public suspicion which prevails. Why were attempts made to give no information at all, and then only to give it in a form which conceals the fact that old offenders have been trading under another name, and have been for the second time detected in fraud on the public service? The information has been extracted with difficulty from the Department, and this fact lends colour to the suspicion that, anxious as the War Office may be to protect the public interest and to expose fraud, it has been prevented by its surroundings from showing up all the persons connected with these nefarious practices. A good deal had been heard of a War Office arrangement, but I think it is evident that there is a contractors' ring. The viewers are appointed by the contractors themselves, and yet the House is face to face with this meagre Return, which conceals the essential facts. I contend that the Return ought to be so amended as to include a period of exclusions and restorations for the last ten or twenty years, and give that complete and unreserved information on the subject to which the House is entitled. No person, however influentially placed, should be screened, and the evidence should be produced in so complete a manner as to convince the public at large that they have heard the absolute truth and the whole truth about the matter. I hope we shall have a full explanation from the Financial Secretary.

*MR. MCKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): The action of the War Office in this matter passes all comprehension. It has been admitted that there have been serious malpractices, but instead of the War Office taking the obvious remedy of publicity it appears to have persistently acted the Christian part of turning the other cheek to the smiter and of concealing the offences of those who have swindled the Department. A clear explanation is needed why the facts should have to be extorted from the War Office, and why the Department should not have taken advantage of the medium of publicity to expose

the malpractices of which it has been the victim. Every effort made by Members of this House to get information in regard to the cheating of which the War Office has been the victim has been constantly met with obstruction. I placed upon the Paper two weeks ago a motion for a return on certain Departmental matters in the War Office. I was asked to postpone my motion. I did so, and put it in a form which I thought would easily give me the information I asked for. What was the result? I was told that no such Return could be issued. If the House will bear with me I will say what the Return was. We know now that in the case of Underwood it was only by accident that the hay was found to be bad and inflammable; but we never hear of those cases in which the War Office officials, doing their duty, detect the efforts of contractors to swindle them. The Return I asked for was, in the first instance, for those cases in which the contractors supplied articles 50 per cent. of which had been rejected by the War Office. I was told that my inquiry would probably be met by a *nil*. I subsequently asked for a Return which would include cases in which 30 per cent. had been rejected as bad. I think it must be admitted that in any ordinary case of business any contractor who supplied goods 30 per cent. of which were not up to the standard cannot have been doing his duty. I am quite prepared to admit that there might be cases in which 100 per cent. was rejected through no fault of the contractor. A big gun might be detected in a small defect, and the whole gun might be returned to have that defect remedied. I do not want to conceal from the House what was the reason for my asking for this Return. It had come to my knowledge that one of the largest contractors for ammunition—Kynoch's—had, in fulfilment of a recent contract, tendered to the War Office some millions of cartridges which were defective owing to the nickel of the cartridges being of improper quality. That is the story I wanted to get out, and I should be extremely glad if the hon. Gentleman is able to tell not only myself, but those who informed me of this matter, that the information was inaccurate. There were other cases in connection with the supply of khaki, for instance, in which direct suspicion of malpractice has been suggested against officials of the War

Office. In all those cases, surely it would be of immense advantage to the public service if the Departmental representative of the War Office were to take the House frankly into his confidence, and not to leave us to extort from him by pressure the information we desire.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The matter which has been brought forward by my right hon. friend is certainly important, and I have nothing to complain of in the manner in which he has stated it to the House. I wish to say emphatically on behalf of the War Department, and especially of that branch of it with which I am more immediately concerned, that there is not the slightest intention or desire on our part to shield any guilty contractor. So far from wishing to do that in relation to the two men whose names appear in the return to which my hon. friend has referred, the Secretary of State himself directed that if it were possible to take criminal proceedings against them such proceedings should be taken, and he obtained the opinion of the Treasury Solicitor, as to whether or not such a course could be followed.

*MR. McKENNA: When was that step taken?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: It was long before any notice whatever of the matter was taken in this House. In point of fact, at the time my right hon. friend moved for the Return the question whether or not they could be prosecuted was under consideration, and it was that fact alone which led me in the first instance to hesitate to give the information which the Return sought for. Even at the present moment I am a little embarrassed in dealing with the question so far as it concerns Underwood, who has been dealing with the War Office under the designation of Bennett, because further fresh circumstances have come to light, and the Secretary of State has only to day asked the opinion of the law officers of the Crown as to whether, in view of these further circumstances, it is possible to take legal proceedings against the firm. I do not feel myself free, therefore, to deal with all the facts that arise in the case; but, speaking for myself, and from recollection, perhaps the House will allow me to say that since I have held the office of Financial Secretary I have not restored to the War

Office list one single contractor who had been struck off, and indeed, if inquiry were made, it would be found that contractors with the War Office would be very far from telling the House that they receive unduly lenient treatment at the hands of the present administration in Pall Mall. As far as Underwood is concerned, he was struck off the War Office list, not for any dealings in regard to forage, but for fraudulent transactions in regard to coal. To this fact it was due perhaps that we did not discover we were dealing with him as promptly as we ought to have done. Although we were looking out for him in regard to coal, we were not looking out for him in regard to forage. It is very difficult in dealing with an enormous number of contractors to ascertain whether or not a contractor is trading under an *alias*. We do not ear-mark any gentleman, but we try to make certain that they do not deceive us. At the same time, I do not disguise that possibly a little more vigilance on our part might have detected the fact that we were dealing with a man who had been struck off the list. Two or three years after Underwood was struck off the list in relation to coal he formed his business into a private limited liability company, and he applied to the then Secretary of State for War, the late Mr. Stanhope, to have the name of the company put on the War Office list. The application was promptly refused, and we heard no more from him. But early in 1892 or 1894—I was not aware this question was going to be raised, and consequently I can only speak as to the facts as they are present in my mind—Underwood purchased the business of Bennett and Son. The Department have ascertained that since the firm of Bennett and Son was on the War Office list, and no fault had been found with the manner in which they had conducted their transactions with the Department. They were not under suspicion, and we were not aware of the fact that Underwood, Limited, had acquired their business. Of course, it is now perfectly plain that one of Underwood's objects in acquiring Bennett's business was to get on the War Office list again. In that he succeeded. Had the Department known that Bennett had become Underwood they would have declined to have dealings with them. Bennett, however, has now been struck off the list. In these circumstances,

Mr. McKenna.

admitting as I do that possibly we might have discovered what was going on earlier, I do not see what more we could do. I ought to add that at the present moment there are proceedings pending between Brown and Underwood, and that makes it a little more difficult to give a full account of all that has taken place. All I can say is that Brown assures me that he is going to come out of these proceedings white as the driven snow. In regard to the Return asked for, I think it is rather a strong order, where a limited liability company has been dealt with in relation to contracts by the War Office to publish all the names of the directors in a black list of the House of Commons. [Hon. MEMBERS: "Why?" and "No, no."] The directors of the company may be perfectly innocent of any fraud which has been perpetrated by their subordinates. All I take exception to is the form in which the notice for the Return appears on the Paper; but I am authorised to say that if the right hon. Gentleman thinks it desirable that a Return should be made the Government will not object. I earnestly hope that the House will not believe that anybody at the War Office desires to conceal anything.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: You have mentioned nothing about Ross.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Oh, yes. Well, the case of Ross is peculiar. He had nothing whatever to do with boots, and my right hon. friend is in error in supposing that he was guilty of supplying bad boot leather. I did not put him on the list, for the name was back on it before I took office. There was on the list of contractors for accoutrements a firm called Hepburn and Gale, who informed my predecessor in office that they had bought the business of Ross. They proved that all the original partners who were concerned in the transactions which resulted in Ross being struck off the list had been done away with. The House may take it as it likes, but two of them were dead, and the only one remaining was proved to have no further connection with the business. Messrs. Hepburn and Gale were allowed to remain, and to use the name of Ross and Company, my predecessor being satisfied that it was merely a name, and not a reality. When I came into office I investigated the matter, and can now assure the House that not a single

individual connected with the old firm of Ross and Company has any interest in the firm of Hepburn and Gale. The list asked for by the hon. Member for Monmouthshire is of the nature of a black list. It would contain the name of every contractor whose deliveries have been rejected up to 30 per cent. If the Return were given in the way it was originally asked for it would contain only one word, "nil," because although many contractors may have their deliveries rejected on account of some small defects, those defects would afterwards be remedied, and the goods passed. I am not quite sure that such a list would not include every contractor with whom the War Office deals. I know a case in which a firm delivered two large guns. These guns were rejected for some trifling detail, which was corrected, and the guns were then accepted. The list, if presented in the form asked for by the hon. Gentleman, would include that firm, and it would be manifestly unfair to include in a black list contractors who had honestly done the best they could. Inclusion in such a list would cast a reflection on a firm, and it might do it serious injury. I therefore hesitated to grant it. The right hon. Gentleman has also referred to the firm of Messrs. Kynoch, and to the fact that they had not been so successful recently in getting their deliveries passed. It is only fair to Messrs. Kynoch to say that some time ago they were the only persons—not excluding the Government factory itself—who could successfully pass the small arms ammunition test, and the War Office were actually obliged to go to them to ascertain what their process of manufacture was, and what detail they insisted upon, in order that the War Office might at the Ordnance Factory be as successful as Messrs. Kynoch. It would not be right to gibbet firms like that who tried to serve the War Office well, because, owing to some exceptional circumstances, the cause of which they are as anxious as we are to ascertain, they have not been able to get some ammunition passed.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Will the hon. Gentleman tell us something about the officer whose duty it is to view the goods?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The officers who inspect the goods are as a

rule Army officers, and their inspection is extremely strict. If those contractors who fail in the first instance, but who, after a trial or two, satisfy the inspectors are to be placed in a black list, one of three things would be certain to happen: there would be additional difficulty in placing contracts, the price paid would have to be greatly raised, or the inspection must be relaxed. I do not think any of these things is desirable.

MR. LOYD (Berkshire, Abingdon): Was there not a very serious forage scandal at the time of the Crimean War?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Yes, Sir, I believe there was.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): May I suggest to my hon. friend that many of his difficulties would be obviated by refusing tenders from men who accept contracts at sweating prices for their goods. The way to attract the best class of manufacturers and the best class of firms as contractors to deal with the War Office, is to give a reasonable price for a good article, and not insist upon a minimum price at which a good article cannot honestly be supplied. That is, I think, one of the fundamental principles that should be acted upon by the War Office, and, indeed, by every other Government Department that has to make contracts with manufacturers. I quite sympathised with my hon. friend the Financial Secretary when he described so pathetically to the House that at one time Mr. Underwood approached the War Office in the form of a sack of coal and on another occasion in the shape of a truss of hay. Well, it is very difficult for my hon. friend to recognise one and the same person in two different forms. As an illustration he gave the case of the two guns, and stated that was a technical error. If it was an attempt to defraud, the name of that firm was quite as much entitled to be published as the name of Underwood's. A technical error—there was some oversight in not finishing the guns. If it was an attempted fraud, then your argument for keeping the name off the list falls to the ground. I can understand articles being delivered with a technical error in their finish or in their equipment, but it is easy for any man who is acquainted with business to know that it is not an attempted fraud, and, therefore, no

Mr. J. Powell-Williams,

penalty ought to follow that neglect, but where acts are evidently committed by a contractor and intended to defraud, then the name ought to be published without reservation. There is one other point I should like to remind the Financial Secretary about, and it is this—whether he could advise the War Office not to punish a workman who gave information to the Government as to fraudulent transactions not only in material but in workmanship. I remember a case only a few years back where a gross case of fraud was attempted in the saddlery department at Woolwich. What happened was that a highly-skilled workman there employed exposed this attempted fraud, and he was promptly discharged. In consequence of representations made in this House he was reinstated in his position, but he was discharged a very short time after that. A pretext was made of certain irregularity on his part, and the man was sent about his business. Those who have worked in Government works know that the Government is subjected to fraud in connection with the work it engages contractors to do, as much or even more than a private person. I have seen frauds enough committed on the Government. What is the consequence if a workman, who has technical knowledge, and knows the quality of material and the quality of workmanship that should be insisted upon according to the specification, reports to the Government or anyone in authority? Why, the workman would be black listed so effectually as never to get employment again with the firm concerned, and his name would be sent round. I am speaking in this respect of what I know. I have seen it done, and no man who has had experience in these matters is going to risk losing his employment, and losing his living almost, by making reports to the Government regarding matters of this nature. I wish the Government Departments would give more consideration to those who are willing to give this class of information in the future than they have done in the past. The Admiralty, I have no doubt, has very similar experience. It is a matter within the knowledge of all or most people, that the War Office is an institution peculiarly liable to frauds of this kind. I am not going to say that my hon. friend the present Secretary is more liable to fraud than any other Secretary that has preceded him or that

will follow him. It is desirable when the public mind is in a receptive condition to deal effectively with fraudulent contractors, and the War Office should show an example to other Departments by setting its own house in order to such an extent that it would terrorise those who live by fraud and fatten on the sufferings of the men and horses who are supplied with their respective fares. I can scarcely imagine a more wicked crime than to send bad food for horses on foreign service. It is a great crime to send bad boots with rotten leather for men in the field and on long marches. [An HON. MEMBER: "Paper soles."] Paper soles, my hon. friend says. I don't know that of my own knowledge, but we do know that very bad material has been sent on the occasion of great warlike undertakings such as we are now in the midst of. I repeat once more that the complaint is that you insist on the cheapest goods, and your contractors believe that you insist upon the cheapest class of article. Your schedules of prices are, I am informed, so put that first-class articles cannot be supplied by respectable firms. You cannot have the best cloth at shoddy prices. The whole thing is a question of price, and if you will give a respectable price and have men who really know how to examine the goods supplied, whether it is hay or cloth or any other article, you will have the best firms in the country at your command. Until you do so you will not get the best firms. A man who is liable to have his goods rejected by a person who really does not understand them is not very likely to bother himself, losing his time and incurring the expense, sending tenders to the War Office. I do hope the Government will mend its manners in this respect. Having reached the limit of human endurance on this question of fraud, I hope that the present Secretary will see to it that he will make one sweep of the whole of these people from the War Office list once and for ever. If he will now undertake to do that I think we shall have some reasonable hope that other departments of the Government will follow the good example that is set.

*MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I do not think the Financial Secretary has failed to realise the popular anxiety that is felt on this important sub-

ject. I rise to call attention to the fact that no doubt without his knowledge the Department has made an untrue Return to the order of the House. On the face of the Financial Secretary's story it appears that at the time the hay was delivered they were not aware that Bennett's hay was Underwood's hay. I understand, however, that at the time the Return was made the War Office knew that Bennett's business had been bought by Underwood's company. If that was so, the registered statutory name of this company was Underwood and Co., Limited, and, knowing that, the Department had no right to return any other name. This is not a mere matter of form; for, but for this, we should not have been left to learn from a casual letter in the newspapers that this defaulting contractor was one who had already been struck off the list for a like default.

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs) asked whether criminal proceedings would be instituted by the War Office against the persons implicated in supplying the goods.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I am advised that if criminal proceedings can be taken they will be taken. The deliberations of the law officers of the Government on the subject are not yet concluded.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I rise not so much for the purpose of entering into the question of the frauds which have been practised in regard to certain Government contracts as to repeat a protest I have made from time to time during the present session against the expenditure.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think one point has not been satisfactorily cleared up by the hon. Member as to which the Members of the House must entertain considerable curiosity, to put it no higher, and that is about the two officers who are named. What was the nature of their offence? What were the circumstances that led to their retirement? Were they retired on account of this, or have they retired in the ordinary course of nature? We want to know a little more as to what the nature of their conduct was. Upon the whole

question I feel that it rather does good to exaggerate these matters. I do not agree with a great deal that has been said as to the probability of great frauds taking place in the public departments. I do not think it is a good thing to run down our public departments too much, and I am not aware that we have any evidence of great frauds having taken place. But that does not make it the less necessary for those in charge of those departments to be constantly watchful. I do not think in this instance there is any sign on the part of the hon. Member who spoke for the War Office or his colleagues of having neglected any reasonable means of protecting the public interest. When a firm changes its name two or three times over, it is very difficult to identify it. But what I would press upon the hon. Member is that the real remedy of the Government in such a case is the power they possess to a greater degree than anyone else of giving publicity to these malpractices—of letting the world know what has happened. That is the powerful instrument we have over contractors. Therefore, I do not look upon this proposal that certain names should be published as at all in the nature of a “black list,” as the hon. Member put it. There may be a great many articles rejected without any discredit whatever to the contractor. An hon. Gentleman spoke of the guns which had to be returned because of some slight defects which were discovered. But that was not a final return. What we want to know is—What articles were finally rejected because of some really serious defect in contravention of the conditions of the contract? If that information was published—if the hon. Gentleman will consider the suggestion and see whether it can be done—I think it would give great satisfaction to the House and be a very considerable protection to the country. Some reference has been made to the well-known case of the saddlery makers in Bermondsey, with which I do not think anybody is so thoroughly acquainted as the present Secretary to the Treasury. The hon. Gentleman nursed that case for years, and I have listened to speech after speech of the most eloquent nature from him with reference to the celebrated case of Messrs. Ross and Co. That was a case which was complicated in a singular way by the fact

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

that if they did not get a share of the Government contracts the whole industry would perish in Bermondsey. I remember I was in office, and appeals were made to me of the strongest kind in the interest of the trade and of the employment of people in that part of London. I was told that trade was not very good, and that the whole trade would go to Walsall, the centre of the saddlery manufacturing industry, if Messrs. Ross and Co. did not get a contract. I managed to steel myself against that appeal, touching as it was, but it appears that afterwards my hon. colleague, whose absence I regret, did make the inquiry which the hon. Gentleman describes, and subsequently restored, not that firm, but their successors, to the list. Cases such as these with which we are dealing appear to show that there is a suspicion in London that the contractors work in and out with each other. We all remember a case a year or two ago in connection with a large hotel in the West of London, where it was discovered that the contractors had been fleecing the company for years, and it was ultimately found that all really centred in one man or very nearly so. There may be cases of that sort among contractors whether for private employers or for a Government department. But, as I have said, the one remedy which the Government has, which is not open to a private firm, is that of publicity. I would also urge upon the Government that publicity is the cure of suspicion. If you wish to get rid of any suspicion, either against the officials of a department or against contractors, publicity is the cure, in small things as well as in great. Although I do not see in what has happened in this case any disposition or intention on the part of the hon. Gentleman of concealing anything, still I think we should always bear in mind that concealment or attempt at concealment is the very worst policy that can be pursued in such a matter.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I have only to say that the two persons whose names appear in this matter were removed from their appointments in consequence of negligence in respect of this particular matter.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I do not propose to add much to the

debate on this aspect of the question, which is now, I suppose, drawing to a conclusion. But I do desire to express the strong feeling which the Government have that there is no subject which more deserves the careful vigilance of the House of Commons than this question of Government contracts. No one can have the most elementary knowledge of the military history of this and of other countries—I am glad to say even more of other countries than of this country—without seeing what incalculable harm to the national interest has been done in the past by the frauds of contractors. The number of valuable lives that have been sacrificed, the number of military operations whose success has been imperilled, the loss of all kinds which great Imperial interests have suffered from the admitted frauds of contractors on whom successive Governments have relied, is one of the most painful chapters in the military history of the last century and of the beginning of this century. We certainly ought to exercise all the vigilance in our power to prevent the repetition of any such crime against the public interest. I think we ought to distinguish between two very different cases which have been, to a certain extent, mixed up in the present debate—the case of fraud on the part of the contractor and the case of error on the part of the manufacturer in producing goods for the public service. I confess I am not convinced, even by what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite in the moderate and interesting speech he has just delivered, that as regards this latter class that publicity which he desires would do any good. I think it would certainly produce great hardship, and I am not sure it would produce any great public benefit. He endeavoured to answer the objection made, I think, by my hon. friend near me with regard to the case of two guns which had been returned and afterwards altered and accepted. He tried to evade that by saying “I do not want a list of those goods which are finally accepted after having been returned and remedied.” But it is impossible for us to distinguish in all cases goods of that kind. In the case of two large pieces of ordnance the identity could, no doubt, be followed through the manufacturing departments of the firm which produced them and remedied the defects which had been

found in them; but in regard to many other articles it clearly would not be possible for the manufacturer to remedy the defects in every case. But is it a crime for a manufacturer who is trying to produce the goods the Government desire to find he has not succeeded in one particular instance? It is not a crime, and ought not to be punished as a crime. Yet the publication of a “black list,” showing that such and such a firm which was asked to produce such goods as the Government could accept had failed to produce these goods, would inflict very serious injury.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think I used the words “I do not look upon it as a ‘black list,’” by which I meant to imply that I did not intend that any slur should be cast on the firms whose names appeared thereon.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I quite understand the right hon. Gentleman's view, but I think he himself will feel that if he does not call it a “black list,” if he does not wish it to be treated as a “black list,” it would in effect be a “black list” in the sense that it would greatly injure that firm's position in regard to its foreign market. It is to our interest that these great firms should not merely manufacture for us, but should have a market in foreign countries, because one result of that is that we have a large surplus power of production to enable us to meet a great national emergency. But if you insist that every error of this kind is to be published abroad, not merely to the British public but to the foreign consumer, I cannot help thinking that such publication will be treated by the foreign consumer as ground for distrusting the British manufacturer, and the British manufacturer will suffer as compared with his foreign rival. And with the loss which the British manufacturer suffers is bound up a certain national loss on our part—in fact our means of rapid production of warlike material might be seriously diminished.

MR. BROADHURST: No one asked for that.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman is mistaken. I am dealing with a procedure which is distinctly asked for. The hon. Gentleman did not ask for

it, but he is not the only gentleman who has taken part in this debate this afternoon. I think the course suggested by the right hon. Gentleman with regard to these errors in manufacture is, perhaps, too severe a one. I do not think any course too severe in the case of detected fraud, and I think no vigilance on the part of the War Office can be too energetic to prevent such frauds taking place. That there is a difficulty in preventing these frauds has been sufficiently evidenced from the debate this afternoon. The authorities at the War Office have not merely to inspect the goods, to find out by inspection if they come up to the Government standard, but they have also got to pursue the tortuous windings of anonymous companies, to follow them under one name or another name, and through the ramifications of ingenious mystification. Well, that is rather a large operation, but it is one which certainly ought to be undertaken by the War Office, and I hope it will be undertaken in a spirit of the most careful inquiry; for I am one of those who think that when a firm has committed a fraud by palming off on the War Office or on the Admiralty goods which are not up to the standard and which are evidently intended to deceive, and which are produced and brought over for the purpose of deception, too great publicity cannot be given to their acts, and no punishment which the laws of the country can inflict can be too severe. I hope, therefore, most heartily that the investigation of the law officers to which my hon. friend has referred, will result in the Government's being able to take criminal proceedings, and bring to a criminal trial the contractors who have endeavoured to commit so great a public crime as to pass off on the public service stores of bad quality. I trust that after this declaration on my part, which, perhaps, was hardly necessary after the statement of my hon. friend, nobody, either in the House or in the country, will think that the Government are indifferent to a matter which is of the very first national importance. Let it not be said that in connection with this war, or any other subsequent operation in which we may be engaged, there has been any repetition of the gross scandals which disgraced the public service through the whole of the last century, and which I am afraid might be found in the earlier history of the

present century. One hon. Member referred to the Crimean War, and I am afraid that in the Crimean War very scandalous cases of this kind occurred. I hope that no such gross scandals will be elicited by the most searching inquiry into the case of the present war which will be undertaken, and on behalf of the Government I say that we shall welcome such an inquiry, and any assistance that can be given to us by the House or the public in seeing that the goods supplied to our men in the field are of the first quality will be welcomed by my hon. friend and by all those who are responsible for War Office management.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): After the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury, I do not intend to discuss further the contract question, although there are still many hon. Members who are not fully satisfied. I rise for the purpose of protesting against the expenditure of public money upon this disastrous war, and it would be a dereliction of duty on the part of Irish Members if we did not avail ourselves of every opportunity of protesting against such expenditure. From the very commencement of the war Ireland has signalled in the most unmistakable manner that she considers this war cruel and unnecessary. It was elicited this evening by the First Lord of the Treasury's reply to a question put by an Irish Member that the amount expended in Ireland out of the sum of £60,000,000 taken under the Consolidated Fund (No. 1 and 2) Bills for this war was a paltry £150,000. Surely, under these circumstances, we are justified in complaining—even if we approved of the policy of the Government—of the very meagre and miserable share that Ireland has got of this large sum of money. If the Government think it right to provide employment at Government works in large industrial centres in England, why should they not do the same in Ireland? If a private firm can go to Ireland and establish factories for the manufacture of such substances as cordite, why cannot the Government go to Ireland and manufacture other things? A complaint was made last night with regard to the expenditure upon Colonial troops as compared with British troops. The Colonial troops are paid 5s. a day, while the pay of the English, Irish, and Scotch troops is only 1s. 4d. per day. I

Mr. A. J. Balfour.

asked the hon. Gentleman why this preference is given to the Colonial troops, and he gave me an unsatisfactory reply. He spoke about the Colonial troops being called upon in an emergency, but that was not a complete answer. If the service of the Colonial troops is of a voluntary character, why should their pay be three times greater than the Regular troops coming long distances from all parts of Scotland, Ireland, and England? This is a point which deserves full consideration by the Government. As to the contract question, I would like to assure the hon. Gentleman, the Financial Secretary to the War Office, that we shall continue to protest against the system which is growing up by which military officers on active service are employed in trade, and against this huge and enormous expenditure upon a war which we believe to be unjust and unnecessary.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.) said the Leader of the House had stated that if he gave the information asked for in regard to the contractors it would injure British manufacturers. He sympathised not with British, but with Irish manufacturers. As regarded the hay supply, the best hay in the world was grown in Ireland, and could be got as cheap there as it was being supplied at the present time to the War Office. He believed that there was only a difference of about 2½d. per ton between good Irish hay and the rubbish which the Government were importing from abroad. He hoped his hon. friend would go to a division as a protest against the stinginess of the miserable policy which had been adopted by the hon. Gentleman opposite and the Government. If the Government were as kind to the people of Ireland as they were to the people of England they would have factories in Ireland, and thus assist to give employment to the people of a poor country which had to find a large portion of the money required for the war. He hoped that the experience which the hon. Gentleman had had of British contractors would open his eyes and induce him to buy hay in the future from Ireland. He had been informed on good authority that even in Ireland foreign oats and hay were imported for the feeding of the horses of the British Army stationed there, and if that were so it was a disgrace to this country. No wonder the Irish people had no sympathy

with the war when the Government passed over the people of Ireland who could supply them with forage almost as cheap as the present contractors were doing, and of a much better quality. It seemed to be the rule at the War Office that "no Irish need apply." Irish soldiers were good enough to carry the trenches in the Transvaal, and to be put to the front in battles, but when it came to buying Irish produce Ireland was ignored. He was very pleased to see the humiliating position in which the Government had been placed owing to the rubbish which had been supplied to them.

*MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside): I desire, before the Irish Members introduce the question on which they are interested, to point out one very serious defect in the administration of the War Office which tends in some degree not perhaps to the grosser forms of fraud, but to defective fulfilment of contracts, which is very serious. I refer to the difficulty in getting the Government Departments to put into force the fair wages resolution passed by this House in 1891. I make no complaint against the Financial Secretary, who is not responsible. It is the system that is in fault. That resolution was passed, not only to satisfy the workmen, but to protect the fair employer, who is prepared to produce a good article, but who is unable to do so when brought into competition with men who flagrantly violate the resolution. It is notorious, and many manufacturers will agree, that the Government Departments often go to the worst contractors, who are given to the shadiest of tricks in their transactions, rather than enforce the resolution; and although the promise given by the Financial Secretary to investigate the matter holds good, the investigation is carried out by a routine which precludes a just conclusion being arrived at. The nation is not getting value for its money simply through the neglect of the Government to see that the fair wages resolution is carried out, with the result that the work is being done by shady firms and the best firms of contractors are prevented from contracting at all. It is only by competition that the best is obtained, but the game to be fair should be played according to the rules, and the Government have laid down certain conditions which are not observed and consequently the best contractors

often decline to enter into competition. I trust that the Government will see that the fair wages resolution is adopted and that facilities are given to obtain the necessary details. The Government offices are so bound up in red tape, and routine is so rampant, that it is absolutely impossible to obtain from them details which an ordinary firm would get to know in twenty-four hours.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) complained of the high rate of interest which was inserted in the Bill for the purpose of borrowing money. He pointed out that it was absurd to insert a rate of 5 per cent. when it was perfectly well known that the war loan now being raised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which had been subscribed for ten or twelve times over, was only to bear 2½ per cent. He also pressed the Government to increase the penalty for illegal trawling, and penalise those who covered their lights while trawling to the great danger of the line fishermen who prosecuted their calling in the stormy seas off the coast of Scotland. He assumed he would be in order in calling attention to the serious inconvenience to Scottish Members owing to the absence of the Secretary of Scotland from this House.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*MR. WEIR: Very well; if he was not in order on that point he would leave it. He was sorry the Lord Advocate was not in his place, because he would have brought under his notice the great need there was of spending the £10,000 which the Scottish Office had placed at the disposal of the Fishery Board of Scotland in 1899 for the purpose of providing a fishery cruiser. Such a boat was very much needed on the coast of Scotland to guard the fisheries, the present cruiser being of no earthly good in these stormy seas to put down illegal trawling. He had asked for a return of the deer forest area in the Highlands, and the return made was inaccurate. The Scottish Office owned that it was inaccurate, and promised another one. He had a letter from the Scottish Office in which it was stated that considering the difficulty and trouble involved—

Mr. Maddison.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in order in discussing a Return on the deer forests.

*MR. WEIR: Am I not to be allowed to discuss the inaccuracy of that Return and the incompetency of the Scottish Office? We pay high salaries to the Secretary for Scotland and other officials, and they should take some steps to get an accurate Return.

MR. SPEAKER: There are various opportunities of discussing the matter of the deer forests; but this is not one of them.

*MR. WEIR: Well, there was another question, that of salmon. The Office of Woods and Forests were disposing of salmon fishing rights, and the reason they gave was that litigation had been raised in various cases. He should have thought that the Crown would have been able to hold their own in all cases of litigation. These salmon fishing rights ought not to be parted with, but should be retained by the Crown, and he asked the Secretary to the Treasury to see that the Office of Woods and Forests do not go on in their mad career of selling the salmon fishings in the way they were doing.

*MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) said that, although the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had dealt with a great variety of subjects, yet some of them were of considerable importance, and it was unfortunate the Lord Advocate was not in his place to speak on these. They could not get any attention from the Treasury in regard to the construction of more fishery harbours, and they complained of remissness in the administration of the laws relating to the protection of the line fisheries against trawlers. What he complained of was that the Government passed Acts of Parliament and declared that these were effective for certain purposes, but they did not take steps to put these laws into operation, as was shown all over the north, east and west coasts of Scotland particularly during the last fortnight. He saw in the newspapers only the previous day that the fishing community of Portessie would have to migrate to another locality, and the whc'e population of another of the

most ancient fishing villages in Aberdeenshire, Old Slains, had last week migrated bodily, and taken up their habitation in Aberdeen. There was no complaint against the lady superior of the village, who was one of the best proprietors in that part of the country. But the inhabitants found that they got absolutely no assistance in building a fishery harbour either at the villiage or in the immediate locality from the public authorities who ought to grant some assistance and relief. There was no country where so little was spent upon what was regarded as essentially a national object: the construction of fishery harbours. Then there was the old grievance of the non-enforcement of the laws against trawling. Trawlers were constantly found working within the three-mile limit night and day, and nothing was done to stop it. He regretted that the Lord Advocate had not had the courtesy to attend in his place to listen to the complaints which were raised in regard to these subjects.

*MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) complained that Ireland was completely boycotted in regard to contracts for the Army, and yet in a shipment of supplies from Southampton, which had been brought from the Continent, no less than 15,000 lbs. were found to be rotten. An English soldier—mark, not an Irish soldier—had written a letter describing the food served out on board a transport during the voyage to South Africa. They had had fresh meat only once in twenty-one days,

and the salt beef and pork were rotten. When they complained to the officers, who were living on their own luxuries, they were told they ought to consider themselves lucky in getting what they did. The soldiers had to buy everything they ate at the canteen. They knew that supplies furnished by English contractors were grown or produced in foreign countries, and what they complained of in Ireland was that, although they paid a very large proportion of the cost of the war, they were absolutely refused fair treatment in the way of contracts. He had brought this question before the House some years ago, but the reply given him was most unsatisfactory. The Financial Secretary had even told him that the climatic influences of Ireland were not suitable for rearing horses for the British Army, when it was notorious the contrary was the fact. Then as to oats, he understood that no Irish producer of corn could tender to the War Office for the supply of oats unless they were of a certain weight, and under that standard Irish farmers were teetotally debarred from entering into such contracts. The War Office ought to be more liberal in the standard they laid down, for it was unfair to Irish and English farmers as well to send so much money to Russia, France, Germany, and the United States.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 274; Noes, 30. (Division List No. 74.)

AYES.

Aird, John
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arrol, Sir William
Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bailey, James (Waltham)
Baker, Sir John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manc'r)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. S. (Hunts)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, Rt. Hn. W. W. B. (Hant.)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bethell, Commander
Bhownagree, Sir M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Bill, Charles
Billson, Alfred
Blundell, Colonel Henry

Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Bracey, Albert
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse

Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Colville, John
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crombie, John William
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Colonel Philip H.
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, M. Vaughan Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Dunn, Sir William
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Elliott, Hon. A. R. Douglas
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Faber, George Denison
Fardell, Sir T. George

Farquharson, Dr. Robert
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E.
 Fenwick, Charles
 Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Mane'r)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Fison, Frederick William
 Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Flower, Ernest
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Fry, Lewis
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Garfit, William
 Gedge, Sydney
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J.
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, (Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Halsey, Thomas Frederick
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Rbt. Wm.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W.
 Harwood, George
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
 Hermon-Hodge, R. Trotter
 Hill, Rt. Hon. A. S. (Staffs.)
 Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampste'd)
 Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
 Holland, William Henry
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
 Houston, R. P.
 Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
 Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Jessel, Captain H. Merton
 Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Joicey, Sir James
 Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hon. Sir U.
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
 Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
 Kimber, Henry
 Kinloch, Sir J. Geo. Smyth
 Kitson, Sir James
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning- (Corn)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)

Lecky, Rt. Hon. Wm. Edw. H.
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Llewelyn, Sir D. (Swansea)
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool)
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowles, John
 Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Lyell, Sir Leonard
 Lyttleton, Hon. Alfred
 Macdona, John Cumming
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Ewan, William
 M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 M'Killop, James
 Malcolm, Ian
 Marks, Henry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
 Milbank, Sir Powlett C. John
 Monk, Charles James
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.
 More, Robert J. (Shropshire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, Walter
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Mount, William George
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
 Myers, William Henry
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
 Percy, Earl
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pilkington, R. (Lanes. Newton)
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lanes. SW.)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plunkett, Rt. Hon. Horace C.
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
 Renshaw, Charles Bine
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T.
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.

Russell, Gen. F.S. (Cheltenham)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrona)
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Sharpe, William Edw. T.
 Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sidebottom, Wm. (Derbysh.)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Smith, James P. (Lanarks.)
 Stanley, Sir Henry M. (Lambeth)
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strachey, Edward
 Strauss, Arthur
 Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
 Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Wason, Eugene
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Weir, James Galloway
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Whiteley, George (Stockport)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, Jos. Powell- (Birm.)
 Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Wolf, Gustav Wilhelm
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudders'd)
 Woods, Samuel
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wrightson, Thomas
 Wylie, Alexander
 Wyndham, George
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Young, Com and'r (Berks, E.)
 Younger, William
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Mr. Anstruther and Mr.
 Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
 Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
 Commins, Andrew
 Crean, Eugene
 Crilly, Daniel
 Daly, James

Doogan, P. C.
 Engledew, Charles John
 Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
 Field, William (Dublin)
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
 Gibney, James

Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
 Hogan, James Francis
 Jordan, Jeremiah
 Kilbride, Denis
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'l'd)
 Macaleese, Daniel
 M'Ghee, Richard

O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)	Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)	Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)	Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)	TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
O'Keefe, Francis Arthur	Tanner, Charles Kearns	Mr. Flavin and Mr. James
Pinkerton, John	Tully, Jasper	O'Connor.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow, at Twelve of the clock.

CONTROL OF THE TREASURY OVER OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis), in moving, "That the exercise of the powers of the Treasury in governing every Department of the Government is not for the public benefit; that by exercising the power of the purse it claims a voice in all decisions of administrative authority and policy, and that the position which through many generations it has occupied has resulted in much delay and many doubtful resolutions," said: I require no small amount of nerve to raise this question, considering the sacred nature of the Department of the Treasury. Other Departments one may raise questions about, but the Department of the Treasury is held to be sacrosanct, because, I suppose, it is the Department which carries the purse. The Treasury has grown from being the guardian of the strong box to becoming the universal controller of every Department of Her Majesty's Government. It regards all other Departments as inferior to itself; it looks upon them as licentious spend-thrifts, as prodigal sons from whose voracious maw it is the province of the Treasury to snatch the fattened calf. When a question arises which needs the exercise of high skill and great knowledge, it has to be decided, not by the Department itself, which possesses all the knowledge required, but by the Treasury, to whom the knowledge has been revealed in some manner from on high. The result is that all the Departments labour under a more than Egyptian bondage, to being called upon to make their bricks without straw, to being subject to a "Mikado" system of duality which requires that the War Office, the Admiralty, and other officials shall be looked after by a member of the Treasury. Who is at fault for the charges set out in the Resolution if they are well founded? We are told it is not the Cabinet. We are told it is not the Chancellor of the Exchequer (although he did write a letter), it is not the Permanent Secretary, Sir Francis Mowatt, and it certainly is not the Financial Secretary. At first I came to the conclusion that it must

be the three Junior Lords who were at fault; but I am now of opinion that nobody is at fault, that it is the usual scapegoat we always fall back upon and which is called the system. A thousand years ago the Treasury was a box and the officials were the persons who sat on the box, and they have been sitting on it ever since. The difficulty is that they sit upon it too tightly. The Treasury consists of the First Lord of the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the three Junior Lords, and the Financial Secretary. The First Lord is not arraigned in this indictment, because he has no public duties in connection with the Treasury. The three Junior Lords are not included in the indictment because their duties seem to consist of sending to members letters giving inaccurate information and making presumptuous requests for their attendance. For what purpose does the Department, as constituted in modern times, exist? I conceive that the most important of its duties is to look after the high finances of the country and to assist the Chancellor of the Exchequer with its knowledge and advice, but it is for that purpose less adequately manned than perhaps any other Department of the State. It should know all about the capacity of the country to bear taxation, and it should know something about taxation. It, however, is so little competent to deal with outside financial matters that it scarcely ever takes a step without making a mistake. I need only recall to the recollection of the House the abandonment of the stamp duty on contract notes in respect of sales of produce, and the fact that every English subscriber to the Greek loan had to pay 1 per cent. more than the subscribers in either of the other two guaranteeing countries. One official who pretends, I believe, to understand these matters, is no doubt a very able man—Sir Edward Hamilton—but he does not suffice for all purposes in which the Treasury should be qualified. The powers of the Treasury are partly derived from Parliament and partly by oral traditions. The powers derived from Parliament are immense and very dangerous. It has power to establish rules for keeping accounts. All objections to items in the accounts must be referred to the Treasury. It may

prescribe forms of accounts, and I have seen forms of accounts prescribed by the Treasury respecting the purchase of Salisbury Plain, which are of the most unsatisfactory character. It has to sanction expenditure and to direct what accounts, other than the appropriation accounts, are to be examined by the Controller and Auditor General. Under the Public Accounts and Charges Act, 1891, the Treasury has power to make every extra receipt to the State what is called an appropriation in aid, the effect of which is practically to entirely withdraw it from any effective control by the Departments. But the claims of the Treasury go far beyond this. Giving evidence before a Select Committee on public moneys in 1856, Mr. Anderson, principal clerk, said that the source of all administrative authority for expenditure was the Treasury, Mr. Anderson added—

“The right of the Treasury to determine what the civil departments may spend and what they may not spend, though modified occasionally by certain special enactments, is incontestable and rests upon an unbroken prescription which has, accordingly, the force of law.”

In 1866 Sir William Dunbar said that, generally speaking, the Treasury made the appointments in all the offices. Now the House will see what it comes to. These are the rights that the Treasury claims. The powers of the Treasury are indeed immense. They are so large that I imagine that in all their extent they have scarcely yet been known to the Members of this House, but they are known and felt daily by every one of the public Departments which is striving to do its duty. Every one of the Departments tells you again and again that it is hampered by the Treasury's exercise of these enormous powers, with no small degree of prejudice to the public interest. I will quote one extract in which it is shown how this power works. Sir R. Knox gave evidence on this subject in 1877, and being asked whether in the public interest he would object to an increase of the Treasury control over the War Office expenditure, he replied—

“That is a very large question; I think the Treasury control is increasing every day, and I cannot say that I think it has been of any advantage to the public service; rather the reverse as regards small matters. I think the Treasury control, from a large point of view and upon large matters, might be strengthened, but as regards small matters I think that, organised as the department is, it would be much better to leave more to the discretion of the Secretary of State; we are frequently by

Mr. Gibson Bowles.

the action of the Audit Department and the Treasury led to make rules and regulations to meet special cases which have a general effect, because it is thought necessary by the Auditor General and the Treasury that wherever any payment is made there should be a rule for it. I think we have been driven into excessive expenditure by over-regulation, and that over-regulation has been brought about by the action of the Audit Department and the Treasury. In large matters I think that the control of the Treasury Department might be increased; in small matters I think it is a pity that it has increased; it has given rise to much work and much expenditure and no advantage.”

Then Sir R. Knox was asked if he agreed that the Treasury control had increased in the sense of looking after expenditure, and he replied—

“It has increased in looking after the twopences; it would be better if it looked more after the hundreds of thousands of pounds.”

I think so too, and hundreds of thousands of pounds are allowed to slip through the net. When it is a question of controlling the Foreign Office, the Treasury makes no question at all. It passes the proposals from that quarter without a word, but when it is a question of stopping a few pounds in other Departments, the Treasury puts its foot down and stops the whole thing. I have shown, and I have endeavoured to do it very briefly, what are the powers claimed by the Treasury. I have shown in the case of one important official what he knows to be facts in relation to the exercise of these powers. I say with regard to the control of expenditure by the Treasury, that it is neither more nor less than the fifth wheel to the coach. I would ask you to remember the authorities and consents which must be obtained before any expenditure whatever can be authorised. First of all, there is the Department itself and the Secretary at the head of the Department. In the case of the War Office, that Department is not likely in any of the various authorities before whom it must come to propose expenses that are not necessary. No Department likes to expose itself to the reproach of being extravagant. Let us suppose that the Department is enormously extravagant, and that the Secretary of State is enormously extravagant, the matter has still to go before the Cabinet, and the Cabinet has to decide the relative claims of the different Departments. If a Department puts its claim too high, the Cabinet has the country before its eyes. Then there is this House, and there is nothing this

House revels in so much, and especially some of the excellent Scotch Members, as in dissecting the items of expenditure. On one occasion, I remember, I actually saved the country £500 a year for ever by obtaining a reduction of salaries of the officers of the House of Lords. Then you bring in the Treasury in addition to all these authorities. You bring in what I have called the fifth wheel of the coach, which at various stages interposes its authority and rights in order to stop expenditure. It may be thought that I ought to give instances of this interference with expenditure. I could but for the fact that my mouth is closed. Ministers of State—I will not look at the Treasury bench lest suspicion should fall on some one—and heads of Departments have imparted to me the most awful instances of the interference of the Treasury, but it has always been with the addition, “You must not quote me.” The fact is they are afraid; they tremble at the idea of a Treasury clerk. When they see a Treasury minute they hoist the white flag, and consequently I am precluded from telling the story that otherwise I could tell. I am able to mention one or two relatively small matters, but I think they will suffice. It is in the small matters that the interference of the Treasury is most felt. If a policeman is wanted in the West of Ireland for an urgent purpose the Treasury will prevent it. [An HON. MEMBER: “Never.”] If money is required to whitewash Bethnal Green Museum the Treasury will prevent it. If the War Office says that a military attaché is required at some new European centre which has developed a military interest, suddenly the Treasury refuses its assent. The Treasury some years ago withdrew the police from West Kensington Museum, with the result that a large and valuable gold collection was stolen, and this year the Treasury has had to restore the police. Again, in the case of the National Portrait Gallery they withdrew the police, and the result was that many portraits were damaged and defaced. I am only at liberty to mention these small matters. If hon. Members will give me a Committee and enable me to calm the fears of great Ministers and officials, and to make them disclose their secrets, I can assure the House that I could make your hair stand on end. I maintain that it is nothing but mischievous. You must trust somebody.

The Treasury theory is that the only person you can trust is a Treasury clerk. I think they are much less to be trusted than the officials of the other Departments. If you refuse to trust the officials of a Department, they are discouraged when they enter on a new project requiring expenditure. You destroy to a certain extent their sense of responsibility, because they feel that their decisions are not final. They know that the Treasury will still have to decide, whatever decision they may come to, and that their decisions may be entirely over-ridden by that Department. Suppose for a moment that this Japanese dual system of trusting only two people is the proper one, is the Treasury a good Department to exercise it? I think it is the worst. As soon as ever a man in the Department arrives at years of Treasury discretion he is at once planted out in some other Department. Treasury officials become the permanent heads of the Post Office, the Customs, the Inland Revenue, the National Debt, and even the Exchequer and Audit Department. The result is that the Treasury is chiefly composed of young and inexperienced persons, some of them fresh from the universities, with a small and inadequate knowledge of life. Being so young and inexperienced, of all others they are least fitted to control other Departments whose officials have greater experience and expert knowledge. Now, I want to show that the Treasury power is not always exercised in restraint of expenditure. The Treasury assumes and has power to sanction expenditure incurred without any previous knowledge of Parliament. I can give one or two instances of it. In 1898-99, for example, it sanctioned, in the case of the Admiralty, expenditure to the amount of £60,335, not a halfpenny of which ever came before Parliament. The purposes to which the money was applied were all very proper and necessary matters of expenditure, but why call in the Treasury? Another illustration is the case of Wei-hai-wei. The Admiralty took possession of the bay there, and it suddenly occurred to them late in 1898 that they had not got Wei-hai-wei itself. The applied to the Treasury for permission to buy the wall of the place, and without any knowledge or permission on the part of Parliament the Treasury gave their sanction to the expenditure of £14,897 17s. 4d., and the Admiralty bought the walled town of Wei-hai-wei.

The Treasury also to an enormous extent withdraws expenditure from the purview of Parliament. The Exchequer and Audit Act of 1866 laid it down that the gross revenues of the State are to be paid into the Exchequer, but that principle has been gnawed away by successive statutes until at last by the Public Accounts and Charges Act of 1891 the most complete power is given to the Treasury to say that anything it liked in the way of extra receipt is to be considered an appropriation in aid. The effect of that was that the Treasury passed a comprehensive minute declaring almost everything that could be conceived to be an appropriation in aid, and at this moment £8,000,000 was in this way entirely withdrawn from the power of that House, and in respect of this large sum they could not move a reduction even of a halfpenny. You must leave them as they are. You cannot increase or diminish them. Those appropriations in aid do not appear, as they should, on both sides of the public accounts; they are deducted from the total, and it is the net amount that is set down in the account. Now I come to the end of my attack. I have endeavoured to cut it short, and I have omitted many interesting circumstances I otherwise should have mentioned. I now appeal to my right hon. friend the Secretary of the Treasury, who was once a candid critic of the Treasury, and who in one of the best and last of the speeches he made while he was still a Member of the Commons of England, and before he became a placeman, was filled with sadness and sorrow at the misdoings of the Treasury, which he complained hampered people who were endeavouring to do their duty in the public interest. I beg him to remember that this is not my indictment. It is the indictment of his own self. I have done nothing more than elaborate imperfectly and inadequately, no doubt the indictment made against it by his own self. I have heard him described in this House as an old poacher turned gamekeeper. I hope that on this occasion he does not propose to take off his velvet and turn squire. That would be truly sad. Is he going to say that "all's for the best in this best of all possible worlds," or is he going to admit, as I hope, that even the Treasury is not absolutely perfect, that even a Treasury clerk is a finite being capable of being improved, and that the Treasury system did not come down from heaven absolutely complete and perfect?

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MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): In seconding the motion, my only feeling of regret is that the question is one that cannot be properly dealt with on the motion. The practice by which the Treasury regulates all expenditure is so deep-rooted, that a change in its operation must be brought about with difficulty. The Treasury system just now is very detrimental to the best interests of the country. As exercised it encourages extravagance and waste, and it really destroys all incentive to originality in the administration of Departments. It disheartens those who have ideas which are apt to conflict with those of the Treasury. I think it is well known to many that a gentleman not long ago felt very deeply the helplessness of the position in which he found himself placed at the head of the Post Office. He conceived reforms and amendments and improvements which with a little latitude he might have given effect to, but owing to the control which the Treasury exercised he was absolutely prevented from attempting. Perhaps I may say at once on the question of remedy that I do not myself think that there is any one remedy which would cure the defects of the present system of control over all Departments. Departments should be taken by themselves and considered on a businesslike footing, and then consideration should be given to the question how in the individual Departments Treasury control may be modified, so as to give to the heads of the Departments the liberty required to carry out the reforms they desire for the benefit of the country. We all know that the Departments at Somerset House are very crammed and wanting for room. There was a corner which was advertised for sale. Obviously it would have been for the advantage of the country that that corner should have been acquired for the purpose of extending the accommodation, but the Commissioners were prevented from carrying out what was contemplated on account of this system of Treasury control.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (Mr. HENRIKER HEATON, Canterbury); House counted, and forty Members not being present:—

The House was adjourned at half aft-r Seven of the Clock until To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 21st March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY.

Report [20th March] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir Reginald Hanson and Mr. Alban Gibbs.

RAILWAY, &c., BILLS.

Copy ordered, "of Report by the Board of Trade upon all the Railway, Canal, Tramway, Harbour and Tidal Waters, Gas, Electricity, and Water Bills, and Provincial Orders, of Session 1900."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 107.]

PETITIONS.

COMPANIES BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Annadale, against; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Lanark, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF SALE) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Greenock, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Fordingbridge; and Esher; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Dunfermline, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VOL. LXXX. [FOURTH SERIES.]

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899.

Petition from St. Mary, Battersea, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN) BILL.

Petition of the Personal Rights Association, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION (MUNICIPAL TRADING).

Petition of the London Chamber of Commerce, for inquiry by a Select Committee; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Wootton-under-Edge; Charfield; Kingswood; Stockton-on-Tees; Sutton-in-Ashfield; Mansfield; Pleasley Hill; Bristol; and North Lambeth; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Manchester; Bristol; Sudbury; Wirral; Hebden Bridge; Glasgow; London; and Walthamstow; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (NO. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Clydebank; Sheffield; and Wycliffe; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

Petition from Bristol, for cessation of hostilities; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Bede; Woodford; Goole; Werneth; Birchfield; Bristol; Great Ayton; Durham; Halifax; Harrogate; Forest Hill; and Tudhoe Colliery; to lie upon the Table.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the chair.

Clause 1 :—

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said he desired to make one or two obser-

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vations with regard to this Bill with the object of eliciting some explanations from the right hon. Gentleman. In October the House voted £13,000,000 for the war. It was now asked by this Bill, which was divided into two sections, to vote close on £47,000,000, making a total of £60,000,000, which, according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was calculated to meet the expenses of the war to September, by which time it was supposed the war would be over. He thought the country was entitled to know, in view of the dissolution rumours, on what basis it was assumed the war would have terminated by September 1. If Lord Roberts had given that advice, he had no more to say, but in his opinion the war would last another year and a half, and would cost £150,000,000 at least. About £2,000,000 of extra taxation was being imposed on Ireland owing to the war—

*THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the remarks of the hon. Gentleman are relevant. All this Bill does is to appropriate certain sums to the services for which they have been voted in the supplementary and ordinary Estimates.

MR. T. M. HEALY pointed out that on the Second Reading the House was allowed to discuss a multiplicity of questions, and he always understood in a Bill of this character the Committee were entitled to discuss the entire policy of the war. There was just one other matter. In the preamble of the Bill the House was made to declare that this £47,000,000 was "cheerfully granted to Her Majesty." There certainly was no cheer in his heart in voting £2,000,000 of Irish money to kill Dutch, and he would move the omission of the word "cheerfully."

*THE CHAIRMAN: I must tell the hon. Member that no separate question is

put in regard to the preamble, as there is no preamble. *

MR. T. M. HEALY: Then may I ask, if this is not the proper time, when will be the proper time to move my Amendment?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid there is no proper time. It has been ruled by my predecessor that the word to which the hon. Member objects forms part of the enacting form of words that have been used for many years, and that there is no means of amending them.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) thought it was the duty of the Irish Members to make one more protest. On the second reading of the Bill the House was allowed to discuss a great many items of interest not only to Great Britain but to Ireland. £13,000,000 had already been granted, and now the Committee was asked to vote a further £47,000,000. The Irish Members had protested against the war throughout, and they considered it most unfair that they should be compelled to pay any portion of the cost of a war which they considered to be unjust.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order! order! I must remind the hon. Member that the question is whether the amounts which the House has already agreed to shall be paid out of the Consolidated Fund.

MR. T. M. HEALY: We shall only take one division, Sir, and we will take it on the second clause.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2.

Question proposed: "That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 98; Noes, 10. (Division List No. 75.)

AYES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arrol, Sir William
Asher, Alexander
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Billson, Alfred
Blundell, Colonel Henry

Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Caldwell, James
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derb'shire)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colville, John
Crombie, John William
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardig'n)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles

Dorington, Sir John Edward
Duckworth, James
Fardell, Sir T. George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Goldsworthy, Major-General

Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Ch. Seale-
 Hedderwick, Thos. Chas. H.
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Lafone, Alfred
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea)
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)

M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
 Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
 Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
 Mount, William George
 Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Perks, Robert William
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs Newton)
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs SW)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Purvis, Robert
 Renshaw, Charles Bine
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T.
 Robinson, Brooke

Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strachey, Edward
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Ure, Alexander
 Usborne, Thomas
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, Sir Richard E.
 Weir, James Galloway
 Welby, L.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunt'n)
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr.
 Fisher and Mr. Fellowes.

NOES.

Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
 Daly, James
 Doogan, P. C.
 Gibney, James
 Harrington, Timothy

Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
 Lawson, Sir W. (Cumb'land)
 Macaleese, Daniel
 O'Malley, William
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. J. P. Farrell and Mr.
 Flavin.

Question proposed: "That Clause 3
 stand part of the Bill."

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) expressed surprise that no explanation had been given by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to the question of the interest which appeared in the Bill, and why the hon. Gentleman had continued to insert 5 per cent. when the War Loan only bore 2½ per cent. He proposed to omit the figure 5 and insert 4.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston) said he had fully considered the point which had been raised by the hon. Gentleman, and had come to the conclusion there was nothing in it. The hon. Gentleman was wrong both in his theory and his facts, for assuming that the money could be borrowed at 2½ per cent., it was as absurd to insert 4 per cent. as 5 per cent. in the Bill.

Clause agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIABILITY OF SHIPOWNERS) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): The object of this Bill is to limit the liability of shipowners in two particulars not provided for by the present Merchant Shipping Act. The House is no doubt aware that by the Act of 1894 the liability of shipowners in respect of damage to property at sea, inflicted by their vessels, is limited to £8 per ton; but the Merchant Shipping Act and the law in general is quite silent as to the liability of shipowners for damage on land, fixed piers, docks, canals, wharves, or landing stages. This omission is somewhat remarkable because in the French code there is a provision limiting the liability of shipowners in this respect. It is believed that the liability in Germany is the same, and there is a Bill now before the Belgian Parliament to limit the liability of shipowners in this respect. The reason for the omission is the less clear if we consider that the object of attaching a limitation to the liabilities of shipowners is because the shipping trade is one which is liable

to peculiar and extraordinary dangers, coupled with the fact that, as a general rule, the shipowner has no control over the circumstances which result in accident. If shipowners were to be made liable for any loss that might be occasioned by their servants, the shipping trade would be overwhelmed with such responsibilities that capital would be prevented from flowing into the shipping industry, and shipowners might be involved in ruin. On that account shipowners have by law been permitted to limit their liability for damage at sea, and there is no reason why that general principle should not be extended to damage to fixed objects. Supposing when a ship is going into dock damage is done, it is quite immaterial to the shipowner whether that damage is done to another vessel or to a pier, and if we look at it from the point of view of the injured person it is equally difficult to see the reason for the distinction. I am quite aware that the dockowners have contended that they are entitled to preferential claims, but seeing that they are paid by the shipowners by means of dues, I do not see that their position is preferential as against shipowners or cargo-owners. I can only assume that the omission which we now seek to rectify was due to the fact that when the Act was passed ships were not so numerous, and that accidents, when they occurred, were not so dangerous as they are now; but owing to the increase of shipping, and the increased costliness of dock and harbour works, such accidents, when they do occur, are more serious; and they are more frequent. I think I shall perhaps make the necessity for the Bill more clear to the House if I mention a few of the accidents that have occurred. The first is the case of a steamer called the "Harold," which in 1899 was going down the Manchester Ship Canal, and when she approached the Latchford Lock her engines were ordered to be reversed, preparatory to entering the lock; but through some neglect in her engine-room the orders were not obeyed, and the vessel continued under full steam and came into violent contact with the gates, which were burst open; the ship entered the lock, and the engineer reversed the engines just in time to prevent the same thing happening to the lower gates. If that had occurred the water in the higher reach of the canal would have flooded the lower reach, and the damage

done would have been enormous. The amount of damages actually paid by the shipowner for this accident was £13,000, while the statutory limitation in respect of damage to shipping was £5,456. On another occasion, a steamer, which had entered Barton Locks, was set in motion by mistake and burst the lower gates, falling down fifteen feet into the lower waters and damaging herself very much. Here again the consequences would have been very serious had not the officials shut the upper gates of the lock, and prevented the water rushing down into the lower reaches. In a third case a ship named the "Blanche Rock" lying outside the Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead, had to be moved up a little closer to the gates, but was moved too far ahead, burst them open, and all the water in the dock flowed into the river, sweeping a number of flats into the river, damaging several steamers, destroying a pontoon and a shed, and causing, I regret to say, some loss of life. And one point I should like to call attention to here is that this clause of the Bill does not in any way reduce the shipowner's liability in respect of any loss of life, but only in respect of damage to property. In the last case the damage done, taking the basis of £8 a ton on the tonnage of that vessel, would have amounted to £3,768, but the dock company alone claimed £6,000, and an enormous amount of liability attached to the shipowner. In consequence of the accident to the "Harold" s.s., representations were made by shipowners to the Manchester Canal Company as to the difficulties and liability incurred in navigating that water, and the consequence was that the Manchester Ship Canal Company, seeing the point, introduced a clause in one of their Bills limiting the liability of owners, so far as the canal was concerned, to £8 per ton, and that is practically the clause which we attempt to make general to all docks and property on land by this Bill. With regard to the attitude of the dock authorities, who ask that if the liability of shipowners is limited they (the dockowners) should be allowed to limit their own liabilities in respect of damage done to ships, we recognise that the contention is a reasonable one, and, therefore, shipowners not only assent to that contention, but they are willing to assist in every way the action

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of the dock authorities to have a clause to that effect inserted in the Bill in Committee. We are willing to accede to the dock authorities a corresponding limitation of liability to that which we claim for the shipowners, but the dock authorities are not agreed among themselves as to the precise form the clause should take, and the details must be considered by the Committee. That being so, and there being absolute unanimity of opinion on this Bill among those interested, I hope the House will pass this first clause, which is just in itself and will be fair in its operation. The second clause is more complicated, and its object is to put the liability of the British and foreign shipowners on a reciprocal footing with regard to collisions at sea. The laws of other countries agree with the law of Great Britain in so far that they agree that the shipowner is liable for the acts of his servants, and that his liability shall be limited; but the law of all foreign countries is that the shipowner who becomes liable for damage by the act of his servants may discharge himself from all liability by abandoning his ship, or what remains of her, and her freight. The continental jurists recognise the principle that a shipowner shall be liable to the extent of the value which he exposes to risk his *fortune de mer*, and no further. It is an old custom, that has been in existence since the fourteenth century, and for 300 years has formed part of the jurisprudence of all foreign countries; and I think I am justified in saying that this is the law of all countries except Great Britain. In my opinion there is a sound reason underlying this, because a shipowner having no real control over the acts of those in charge of his vessel, is not morally responsible for loss or injury caused by their negligence. Nevertheless it is desirable that the sufferer should not be without a remedy; and these two requirements are satisfied by the rule of law that the owner shall not be liable to a greater extent than the value of that which he has exposed to risk. The fundamental difference between the law of Great Britain and that of foreign countries is that while in this country the shipowner is made personally liable to the extent of £8 per ton, foreign shipowners can get rid of their liability by abandoning their vessel and her freight. Every country in the world except Great Britain accords to the shipowner this right

of abandoning his vessel and her freight. According to the common law of England, the shipowners' liability is unlimited; but in 1862 the Legislature of this country enacted that in regard to property the owner was to be liable to the extent of £8 per registered ton of his vessel, and in regard to life to £15 per ton. Now let us consider the effect of this difference in the law? If a British ship and a foreign ship were in collision on the high seas and both sank, if the wrongdoer were British, the foreigner could come to a British court and recover £8 per ton from the British owner, but if the foreigner were in fault and the British owner went to the foreign court he could recover nothing. An actual case of this kind has occurred, viz., that of the "Indra" s.s. (British), and the "Desterre" s.s. (German), which came into collision. Both vessels were to blame, and the foreign owner obtained £30,852 damages in a British court. If the German steamer had been at fault and our shipowner had pursued him in a German court, the German owner would have escaped altogether by simply abandoning his ship. He would have said, "You can have my ship; she is at the bottom of the sea, and you can go and take her." If a collision occurs between a British and a foreign vessel, neither being sunk, and the vessel in fault is of lower value than £8 per ton, then if the British owner is in fault the foreign owner can recover his £8 per ton in a British court, whereas if the foreigner is in fault the British owner in a foreign court can only recover perhaps £4 or £5 per ton, according to the value of the vessel. Even in regard to actions in British courts against foreigners we are not able to enforce the £8 per ton if the value of the foreign vessel were below that figure, for then the foreign owner would not give bail. The foreigner has thus the option of limiting his liability to £8 per ton, or of abandoning his vessel and freight, whichever may be to his advantage. The French law does not even permit British owners to abandon their ships in the French courts, and holds that outside the three-mile limit the law is the law of the flag, and therefore they say, "She is a British ship, and cannot be abandoned, and we hold you liable to the extent of £8 per ton." I think I have shown the way in which the difference between British and

foreign law is applied against Great Britain in every way, and the result is that our ships are worse off and pay a great deal more to foreign countries than they would do if they had reciprocal treatment. That is a state of things that ought to be put an end to. It is reciprocity that we ask for. But I put the case on higher ground, that there is great need of a uniform international law in such matters. The open sea is no man's land, it is a public highway where the vessels of all nations meet on terms of equality, subject to a common law of the sea; but this common law is not universal, and I propose to pass the second clause of this Bill not only as an act of justice to the shipping trade, but as a step towards international uniformity. A recent conference held in London, convened by the International Law Society and the Comité Maritime International of Antwerp, and consisting of eminent jurists, legislators, and mercantile men from Great Britain, the Continent, and the United States, after a long discussion, arrived at an agreement which is substantially expressed in the second clause of this Bill. There was a time when the policy of this country was to foster the shipping trade, or, at least, to leave the shipowners untrammelled, and then came a period of restrictive legislation, when burdens and liabilities were laid on British shipowners from which foreign owners are entirely free. Since then there has been a slight reaction, due in no slight degree to the present President of the Board of Trade, who has resisted further restrictive measures, and done something to alleviate in a slight degree the burdens devolving upon shipowners. I think we ought to acknowledge our indebtedness to him and the sympathetic attitude he has always displayed regarding the shipping trade. But what have foreign countries been doing? They have been encouraging the shipping trade in every possible way by bounties on navigation or bounties on the construction of ships, and we know that there is before the American Congress at the present time a measure proposing to grant large bounties to American shipping and American shipowners, and in that way efforts have been made to increase their merchant shipping; because, after all, they know that merchant shipping is one great

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source of wealth and prosperity. If the shipping trade is discouraged in this country and encouraged by foreign countries the natural result must be that we must decrease and they must increase, and the maritime supremacy so long enjoyed by this country must pass away from it. That is the opinion of many who are well able to judge as to the position at the present time. There are signs of that already appearing. One sign is the displacement of British by foreign seamen to a great and increasing extent; and another is the transfer of British shipping to foreign flags, which is increasing every year. Well, it is as far as possible to prevent this that I appeal to the House to grant the Second Reading of this Bill. I know that to a large extent we must expect opposition to the second clause. I hope that if the Government cannot see their way to assent to the second clause they will take the matter into serious consideration and grant a Committee to inquire into this matter. I put the case now to the House as a whole. I think we ought to have the Bill as a whole. I trust the Government will give us their support to pass the Second Reading of the Bill, and I put it before the House as an act of justice to shipowners and an instalment of international uniformity. I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed
"That the Bill be read a second time."—
(*Mr. Charles MacArthur.*)

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): There is a very strong case indeed for the Bill, and it has been admirably presented by my hon. friend who has just addressed the House. So far as the first portion of the Bill is concerned—the part as to the limitation of liability for damage to fixed objects—it is really a corollary of existing statutes, which are as old as George II. and George III.—the foundations of shipping limitations—and so recent as the Merchant Shipping Acts of 1854 and 1894, which confirmed and renewed that limitation. I think it is to be assumed that, inasmuch as the limitation does not rest on the common law or even upon maritime usage, but upon the express words of statutes its enactment is founded upon deliberation,

and indicates the decided sense of this House that this limitation is based upon a proper principle. We have also the fact that the limitation is supported by the provisions of the great majority of the codes of foreign nations. It was included, I believe, in the French code, but long before that it existed in French ordinances which were passed for the purpose of increasing the maritime trade of France. It existed in a maritime nation like Holland at an early period, and is found in ordinances of Rotterdam, Hamburg, and other great maritime ports. I think it may be said, therefore, that the common sense of maritime nations has generally felt that this provision is essential to the full development of that important branch of national industry, the shipping trade, so that the limitation has an international sanction. I would suggest to the House that the great basis of that provision is probably that there must practically be a proportion between the return expected in commerce and the risk which is undergone, and if the disproportion is so great as to hazard a man's whole fortune in consequence of the acts of those over whom he has no immediate control, then you place by a law of that description a limitation upon shipping and commercial enterprise, which other nations and our own have felt to be almost prohibitive. The principles upon which the law of limitation is based have been put before the House, and I think they only require consideration to recommend them. The perils of the sea and the difficulties of navigation are exceptional, and are probably the first ground upon which limitation has been enacted. It has also been provided for the encouragement of maritime enterprise, and I think when the statute of George II. was originally passed it was on that express ground among others, and upon petitions presented by the shipowners and merchants of the city of London expressing their alarm for their business if a case which established unlimited liability were upheld by the legislature. Those grounds are fully set forth in the preamble of that statute. But after all, one of the chief grounds of this exemption from complete liability seems to me to be a necessary condition under which the shipping industry is carried on—that of the owner being himself at a distance and absolutely dependent in a difficult

and dangerous calling upon those whom he employs, and over whom he has no continuing control. That this principle underlies the legislation that has taken place is shown by one case in which the shipowner is still, notwithstanding the statute, held to be liable, namely, if he happens to combine in himself the position both of owner and master, and when he is on the spot taking part in the navigation of the ship, in which case he is not able to avail himself of the limitation. The calling is so exceptional, and the dependency so extreme in difficult circumstances on the part of the owner, that he ought to be specially protected. I can imagine its being said that such a provision may tend to negligence on the part either of the owner or the master or crew. I think the great fact—and surely this is an appreciation of the encouragement given to maritime enterprise—that the mercantile marine of this country has transported so vast an army to South Africa without the loss of a single life, is, at any rate, an indication that there has been no growth of negligence on the part of shipowners, and no deterioration in the character of our seamen in consequence of such legislation. The statistics which show that casualties in which there is loss of life are decreasing point to the same conclusion. The particular amendment of the law proposed by this Bill is in relation to fixed objects, and the principles apply equally, for these works are very costly and equally within the dangers and difficulties of navigation, even in canals in which we have instances of injuries. It cannot be said that this is adding to the principles on which the Merchant Shipping Act is based by including objects on land. I venture to suggest that there is a provision already in relation to objects on land, the principle of which is the same, and the growth and origin of which has been the same—I mean the Carriers Act. The Carriers Act protects a common carrier in the case of the loss of or injury to valuable articles. He is equally dependent upon those whom he employs, and difficulties of land transit exist, though not so much as in the days of highwaymen, so the law limits his liability to a very moderate amount as compared with the value of the articles which from time to time are entrusted to

his custody for carriage. Originally a common carrier was an insurer; but it has been felt that it would be a very unjust state of affairs if the risk was so wholly disproportionate to the return to be expected and the remuneration to be gained from the calling. It is a singular fact that the first statute of George II., limiting the liability of shipowners, was passed on exactly the same principles as the limitation in the case of the Carriers Act. In other words, to meet the carriage of valuable articles—the particular case being the carriage of bullion to Portugal—for to the astonishment of the shipping community of London it was held that the shipowner was liable to the full amount of the article carried. The statute of George II. therefore limited liability at first to cases of robbery and fire, just as in the case of the land carrier, and that was followed by the Act of George III., and the more recent Acts of 1854 and 1894, placing limitation of liability on a firm and broad basis. I think, under these circumstances, there is an irresistible case for the present Bill. As I have said, it is a consequence of the principles on which legislation was originally initiated, and I trust the reasons advanced by my hon. friend will commend themselves to the House, so that an act of justice to the shipowners will be done by the passing of the Bill. I have only one word to say about the second part. I think my hon. friend said very wisely that he left the alteration of the law as to the right of abandonment very much in the hands of the Government, and I shall be interested to know what course they will follow. In these days of great international trade it has become most desirable that we should have a wide assimilation of the law of nations. Certainly in this particular case it seems to me that the principle of abandonment has been amply justified by my hon. friend. The great reason why shipowners claim this clause is that in many cases they are in an unequal position as compared with foreign and competing owners. I will not argue the case so fully of our own ports, though even here there are great comparative disadvantages, but take the case of foreign ports, where a foreign shipowner thinks proper to bring his remedy. He may choose that law, foreign or English, which will suit his purpose best without any regard whatever to justice toward

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English shipowners. If he thinks it well to take his own foreign principle of abandonment as the basis of his law, he does so if it pays him better. If, on the other hand, he finds the English law of limitation by amount works out more advantageously he says, "We will try you by your own law." He thus gains an unequal advantage. On the other hand, the English shipowners are practically unable to adopt the same course, and thus you have a breach of that equality which is equity. This clause asks that equity shall be done to the British shipowner, and it asks it with the assent of foreign nations. The proposal is to place our people on an equality with foreign nations, in both our courts and theirs, not against their will, but as interpreted by the international conference, with their full will and assent, accepting as they do the right of abandonment as a principle of modern international law. The object of this Bill is simply to assimilate our law to the foreign law, and to place foreign shipowners and British shipowners on an equal basis. I hope that, after what has been said by my hon. friend, those who take an adverse view of the measure, such as dock and harbour authorities, will be conciliated, for they may be assured that there is no disposition whatever to do otherwise than fully recognise reciprocal rights. But that cannot be done at this stage of the Bill. If one's contention in favour of the assimilation of the foreign law to the British law is correct, the Bill must, of course, go into Committee on that point, apart altogether from the question of limitation. I hope when that time comes the general indications of agreement which have been shown to-day and which are seriously and genuinely felt by the shipowning interest, will be put into words. The privilege which we seek is one which we are equally prepared to extend to those owners of property who may be affected by the passage of this Bill. There are other points of absence of limitation of liability where it ought to exist; there are many anomalies, one of which is that simply on the technical ground that the Crown can do no wrong, or on the equally technical ground that no statute binds the Crown unless the Crown is expressly mentioned therein, a mercantile shipowner might be made liable for the whole value of one of Her Majesty's ships in the event of

its being injured by collision with a merchantman. But that is not a point I am going to raise now. I shall certainly do nothing, by introducing other elements, to jeopardise an act of justice to shipowners. If the time should arrive in Committee for speaking of these other matters, well and good; but for the present I heartily support the proposal made by my hon. friend, and, in justice to the shipping industry, I hope it will be carried.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): As my objection to this Bill is confined to the point raised by my hon. friend who has just spoken, it might appear that I should be satisfied with the assurances which have been given by the mover of the Second Reading of the Bill. But I am not quite sure that I can be so satisfied—not that I doubt the sincerity of my hon. friend, or of those who are acting with him, but because I am not certain whether the forms of the House will allow the clause which he has promised to be inserted in Committee. If that question is satisfactorily cleared up I should be quite willing to withdraw my opposition to the Bill; but in the circumstances it appears to me and to those for whom I am acting that I have no alternative but to oppose the Second Reading. Although it has been said that the principle of reciprocity is fully admitted, and that those who are supporting the Bill are willing to insert such a provision, the fact remains that it is not at present in the Bill; and as long as it is not in the Bill, or until we are satisfied that it will ultimately be in, we must continue our opposition. I need not labour the argument in favour of this clause for which I contend, but at present the Bill is one-sided. It may be a question—but it is one into which I shall not enter—whether it is right for Parliament to extend the limitation of liability which at present exists. I quite admit that there is a *prima facie* case in the legislation which has already taken place on the subject, and as there is a limit at present existing it may be right to extend it. But certainly if it is extended there should be this reciprocity between the two parties who are concerned when damage occurs. At present there is substantial reciprocity, because although an owner may, when he is in the right, receive only a portion of

the damage, yet when he is in the wrong he would have to pay only a portion of the damage. In the measure proposed there would be no reciprocity. The shipowner would receive from the dock or harbour authority his damage in full, but in the event of the fault lying with his ship the dockowner might receive only a proportion of the damages. That is manifestly unfair, and it is out of harmony with the law as it at present stands. But I need not press this point, as those who are supporting the Bill see the justice of our case, and are willing to grant it. At the same time, some action is required on the part of this House before the suggested clause can be inserted in Committee, and that is the reason why my hon. friend opposite, whose name is on the back of the Bill, has an Instruction on the Paper, to provide for that being done. It would certainly be very bad legislation, and cause a great deal of injustice and irritation, if the reciprocal clause did not appear in the measure. It is because I am in the difficulty of not feeling safe in withdrawing my opposition that I have no alternative but to proceed with the Amendment of which I have given notice, and which I now beg to move.

MR. PLATT-HIGGINS (Salford, N.) formally seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

“ To leave out all the words after the word ‘That,’ in order to add the words ‘this House does not consider it would be equitable to pass a Bill extending the limitation of the liability of the owners of ships to claims for loss or damage to property on land without a reciprocal limitation of liability in favour of the owners of such property for loss or damage caused to ships.’ ”—(Sir William Houldsworth.)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.”

SIR J. LENG (Dundee): When I agreed to my name being placed on the back of this Bill there was no anticipation of any difference of opinion arising between shipowners and dockowners. The dockowners had, in fact, come to an agreement with the shipowners, and it was only when it was found that the Bill did not contain the clause which it is desired to have inserted that the dockowners and the harbour authorities felt it necessary to take steps to protect their own interests. All that is required is that reciprocity should be given to the

harbour authorities and the dockowners. I think it would clear the atmosphere to a certain extent if I asked you, Sir, as a point of order, whether I shall be at liberty to move the Instruction which stands in my name.*

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not know whether it will facilitate the progress of this Bill, but I may say that I think the Instruction is unnecessary, and on that ground it is out of order. I think its object might be obtained by an Amendment. The Bill proposes for the first time to limit the liability of ships for damage to piers and harbours. I think an Amendment might be moved saying that the House considers that that limitation should be given only on condition of a reciprocal limitation.

MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I rise to support the Amendment. I understand from the correspondence which has sent to me that promises were made before the Bill was introduced that a clause to this effect should be included in the Bill, but when the Bill comes before the House there is no such clause to be found. It is therefore necessary to take care that reciprocal terms should be included either in this Bill or in some future measure, and I am supporting the Amendment in order to bring about that result. This Bill has for its object the freeing of shipowners from some of the liability which at present rests upon them in regard to collisions at sea or in harbour. But the proposal requires extension in some way, because there are other persons liable who are entitled, I think, to be included within the scope of any such measure. I refer to naval officers. At present, if a man-of-war damages a merchant ship, it is true, as the hon. Member for South Islington said, the merchant vessel has no claim against the man-of-war, but the owners have a claim against the captain of the man-of-war, and may sue him for the whole amount of the damages. About four years ago a man-of-war damaged the ship "Syren," so that she foundered. In the inquiry the captain of the man-of-war was held to be in the wrong, and had to pay on the usual scale

of £8 a ton. The Admiralty are not bound to pay anything, but I understand that they always pay according to scale, and that they are always willing to receive payment according to scale. But the officer in command of a man-of-war is personally liable, and I certainly think an officer should be held free from responsibility in such a case. If he is to blame he will be dealt with by the Admiralty according to the rules of the service, and such claims should not be allowed to hang over him. In the case of the "Syren" the claim was for £86,000, and the amount offered by the Admiralty according to scale was little more than £4,000, but the captain of the man-of-war was, and I suppose is still, liable to an action on the part of the owners of the "Syren" for the balance of about £82,000. I hope the supporters of this Bill will not object to the exemption of naval officers from all liabilities, in view of the way in which the Admiralty deal with such cases, and I hope the Government will see that such a provision is inserted in the Bill in Committee. There is another point to which I wish to direct attention, and that is with regard to the division of the payments. At present the whole of the compensation received is paid to the owner of the ship. The master and crew receive nothing, although they may have lost their all. In the case to which I have referred the crew lost everything, but the Admiralty handed over a sum sufficient to make good the loss of their effects. That was the first time the Admiralty had done such a thing, and I hope it is a precedent which will always be followed. In the case of a merchant vessel the crew would receive nothing whatever. I think, therefore, that provision should be made for a more equitable distribution of the compensation received. First of all, sufficient should be taken to reimburse the crew for the loss of their effects; secondly, the passengers should be recouped; and then the cargo of the ship should come in. That, I think, is only reasonable and fair. It has been stated that the captain of a vessel is liable for the whole amount if he is in any respect also part-owner. He has no protection under the Act of 1894. If the captain is still to be held liable—I think he ought not to be—the officers and crew should not be so held. I hope the supporters of the Bill will permit Amend-

* The Instruction standing on the Paper in the name of Sir John Leng was as follows:—
"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to provide a limit to the liability of harbour and conservancy authorities."

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ments in the directions I have indicated to be made in Committee, as it is only right and proper that the Bill should be so amended.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): As the House listened with so much attention to the clear and lucid statement of the mover of this Bill, it must have felt that there was a strong case in favour of the measure. Whether that case is strong enough to succeed on both the counts into which the Bill may be said to be divided, the House will be better able to judge after it has heard arguments in support of the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for North-west Manchester, and a statement by the hon. Gentleman the Attorney General with regard to the international questions involved. As regards the first part of this Bill, dealing with the question of limiting the liability of shipowners for damage which their ships may do to fixed objects upon land, I confess that I have not heard from the hon. Baronet or anybody who appears to support him a single argument worthy of consideration. Let us examine for a moment what is the reason the liability of shipowners is limited as it has been limited for a century and a half by statutes of this House. The reason is that the ordinary law of master and servant is inapplicable, because the fundamental principle of that law does not apply in the case of shipowner and shipmaster. When you accept the ordinary principle of justice that the employer is liable for the wrong-doing of his servant, and must make good the consequences of that wrong-doing to anyone who suffers thereby, you set up that principle because the servant is under the orders and control of his master, and therefore the master must be responsible for that which the servant does. But in the case of a shipowner, the ship may be several thousands of miles away; the person having control of the ship is technically known as the shipmaster, and he is only nominally and in no degree substantially in the service of the shipowner so far as control over his acts is concerned. What is the position, in relation to this rudimentary principle, of a dock owner, a dock master, and the official in charge of a wharf? Does the hon. Baronet say for a moment that any dock owner or person representing a dock trust cannot daily

and hourly supervise the acts of the wharf master or dock master or harbour master? The two cases are fundamentally different, and to my mind there is not a single reason which is likely to justify the dock owners in saying, that because the shipowners come here asking for a proper and reasonable extension of the existing law, they must have a similar extension. The dock-owner can, if he chooses, introduce a Bill of his own, but it seems to me to be a dog-in-the-manger policy on his part to say that unless he is allowed to ride off on the shipowners' horse he will do his best to cause that horse to stumble—in other words, to prevent this Bill being passed by the House. One word with regard to placing the British shipowner on an equality with the foreign shipowner. What the Bill asks is equal rights among shipowners, British and foreign. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL was understood to dissent.] My right hon friend the Attorney General says it does not. But having read the Bill, it does seem to me that there is a substantial difference between the application of the law as it now stands to British shipowners and its application to foreign shipowners. If a British shipowner had the right to surrender the wreck after a collision to a foreign shipowner, he would be on the same plane as the foreign shipowner whose ship is in this country, perhaps, arrested. But no doubt we shall hear a clear statement upon this important international question by the Attorney General. My object in alluding to the matter was to refer to a point which has not yet been mentioned, namely, the substantial difference in value that obtains between British and foreign ships. Every year old and obsolete tonnage of the British mercantile fleet is being sold to foreigners. When a vessel is too old and antiquated to be worked at a profit by the British shipowner, her natural fate is to be sold to a foreign shipowner, who, by reason of being able to load his ship deeper than the British shipowner in running between foreign ports, is able to make the ship pay. That has the effect of reducing still further the value in England of such vessels before they are sold to foreign buyers. It is perfectly true that a small and comparatively valueless vessel is capable of inflicting fatal damage on the finest mail-steamer under the British

flag. There was an instance not many months ago when an important steamer carrying a large number of passengers was run into by an old sailing vessel amidship, broadside on, and sunk in a very few minutes. When one remembers that a fatal accident may take place to the largest British mail-steamer by collision with even a valueless Norwegian brig, one sees how important it is to make as equal as possible the relation of British and foreign shipowners in regard to their liability. It is because I have the greatest respect for what may fall from my hon. friend later on, and because I believe the Bill will render substantial justice to shipowners in relation to their liability for damage to fixed objects on land, and in giving them a nearer approach to equal treatment with foreign shipowners, that I shall support the Second Reading.

MR. HARRINGTON (Dublin Harbour): I was very glad to hear that those who are opposing this Bill are prepared to accept a compromise. But if the speech we have just heard is an indication of the manner in which the Bill will be promoted in Committee I am sorry to say that so far as we are concerned the reasonable attitude we proposed to take up cannot possibly be persevered in.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY: I spoke for myself only.

MR. HARRINGTON: It seems to me to be absolutely unreasonable on the part of owners of merchant shipping to seek to limit their own liability by a certain standard, and then when they come into collision with, or are injured by, the property of other persons, to fall back on the limitations of the law regulating the relations of servant and master, and to say that although they do not apply to ships at sea, they must be held to apply to harbour or dock authorities. So far as I gather, those who are opposing the Bill are opposing it nominally with a view to obtaining this reciprocal treatment for dock and harbour authorities, and if they are prepared to accept the assurance given by the promoter of the Bill I see no reason whatsoever, after your ruling, why the measure should not have a quick passage through this House to-day. According to your ruling this reciprocal clause can very easily be in-

Sir Fortescue Flannery.

serted, by which the harbour authorities will be given the same advantage as the shipping authorities are seeking for themselves. So far as the question of collision at sea is concerned, I take it that the merchants of the United Kingdom are interested in both sides. They are the men whose vessels sometimes inflict the injury, and they have limitation of liability there; but they are also running the risk of being the sufferers by that limitation in certain cases. Undoubtedly, so far as the shipping of this country is concerned, it is absolutely unfair and unreasonable that the merchants should be placed in a disadvantageous position as compared with merchants of other countries if a collision occurs. I think the provision offered by the promoters of the Bill is a very reasonable one, and, for my part, opposing the Bill only because it did not give the reciprocal advantages which are sought, I should be very glad to see the Bill go into Committee and to give it my support with a view to that result. I think the mover of the Amendment should be satisfied with the assurance of the promoters and with the ruling that such an Amendment is not only in order, but can very easily with the consent of the supporters of the Bill be inserted in Committee. I would therefore appeal to the hon. Baronet not to hinder the progress of the measure, because I think the sense of the House will be in favour of the granting of these reciprocal advantages.

*MR. WARR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Perhaps I may be permitted to say that when my hon. friend introduced this Bill, and presented it to the authorities of the House, it did contain a clause giving the harbour authorities the reciprocal advantages for which they ask. It was only because it was considered that the title of the Bill was technically too limited that the clause did not appear in the Bill as circulated. Having regard to your ruling that this clause can be introduced in Committee, all I have to say is that so far as the promoters of the Bill are concerned, they do not associate themselves with the criticisms of my hon. friend the Member for the Shipley Division of Yorkshire. They think it fair and reasonable that the reciprocal advantage which is sought by the harbour authorities should be secured, and for that reason they

are prepared to do everything in their power for the purpose of obtaining the insertion of the clause. I trust that that assurance will be satisfactory to the hon. Baronet the Member for North-west Manchester. I thought it right on this subject to ask the judgment of another set of people interested in the matter, and I am able to say that so far as it concerns the Liverpool Underwriters' Association, while they are not so much enamoured of the provision in favour of the harbour authorities as they are of the first clause, they will not take any steps to prevent the Bill containing such a provision from passing into law. With regard to the second clause, I should like to say, speaking with some experience in the matter, that it must be admitted that when a foreign and an English ship meet in an English court of law the English shipowner is at a very great disadvantage. Take a case in which both vessels are sunk. The foreigner can come to the English court, and, if he succeeds in establishing the liability of the English shipowner, he can recover up to £8 per ton, because the shipowner is under a personal liability. On the other hand, if the foreign shipowner should be found to blame, there will be a judgment which may be of no advantage at all to the English shipowner. Or supposing it is a case not of total loss but of damage. In the one event the foreign shipowner will obtain damages in full, while in the other the English shipowner will get a judgment from which practically he can reap no advantage whatever. There is a provision in the Act of 1861 which was intended to guard against this injustice. The court is enabled to stay an action if the defendant ship has been arrested, until security is given for any amount that may be awarded. Unfortunately it is extremely easy to evade that provision. In such a case, I believe, it is the constant practice not to bring an action in the name of the foreign shipowner, but to select the name of the foreign ship's cargo owners, and I understand that in Scotland it is possible to associate with the name of the plaintiff the name of a person within the jurisdiction of the court who will undertake responsibility, and so the provision of the Act of Parliament is avoided. The provision in the Act of 1861 has no application unless the defendant's ship is placed under arrest,

and the foreign plaintiff is wise enough not to proceed to arrest when the consequence of that step may be to involve him in the obligation to give security for the counterclaim. These are difficulties which present themselves in proceeding in an English court, and we have already heard what an extraordinary injustice presents itself when proceedings are taken in some of the foreign courts. The French court actually, in the case of a collision on the high seas, applies the law of the flag to an English ship, and the law of France to its own shipowners, so enabling the French ship to avoid all liability on the abandonment of the ship and to secure judgment against the English ship to the full extent of £8 per ton. The clause before us endeavours to deal with this extremely difficult matter. I do not feel sure that it solves the difficulty. It is a difficulty which can be solved by the assimilation of the law of England and of foreign countries, but my hon. friend has told us that at the meeting at which this matter was discussed by foreign jurists there were no indications of foreign countries being at all inclined to accept the English liability, while, on the other hand, I do not think there is the slightest chance of proposing with any success to the English Legislature that shipowners' liability should be limited upon the foreign basis. My hon. friend has said that this Bill is an endeavour to carry out a compromise arrived at at the meeting of the International Maritime Committee to which he referred, and he read to the House the resolution. It states that "the conference recommends for universal legislative adoption" the rule which it mentions. This Bill will not bring about the "universal legislative adoption" of that rule. We cannot legislate here for foreign countries. I must further observe with regard to that resolution that when it came to the vote of the English representation it was passed by a majority of ten to four, but it is very remarkable that amongst the four was the president upon that occasion, Mr. Justice Phillimore, who is most thoroughly acquainted with this matter in all its bearings. What may have influenced his view on this particular question I cannot say, because it does not appear in the proceedings. There are several difficulties in connection with the matter, one of which is with reference to the cargo on the

English ship. Is the cargo on board the English ship to have one principle of limited liability applied to it, while another principle of limited liability is applied to the cargo on board the foreign ship? I do not regret that the clause has been included in the Bill as has been presented to the House, because it has enabled my hon. friend and those who have followed him to put before the House in the most able manner the difficulties under which English ship-owners labour when they are involved in litigation with foreign shipowners, and the disadvantages which they suffer in consequence. I hope my hon. friend will not regard this clause as of vital importance. It seems to me that it is totally distinct from the first clause in the Bill. I trust the Government will give their support to, at all events, the first clause, and that they will give their consideration to the questions raised by the second, even if they do not feel themselves at liberty to sanction its passage into law.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I rise to oppose this Bill in the interests of seamen and working men. I am not sure as to whether the promoters of the Bill are prepared to make it more clear whether the first clause applies to the loss of life and limb. If not I shall oppose the Bill, and do all I can to prevent it being passed into law. I am surprised that the shipowners should come to the House of Commons and ask it to pass a law to limit their liability to the extent of £15 per ton in the event of loss of life, and to £8 per ton in the case of property. I am confident that if Members of the House of Commons understood how this Bill will affect the interests of a large number of people they would reject it by a very great majority. As far as the law applies at the present time, if any damage is done at sea outside ports and harbours, the shipowner is protected by this limitation of liability. We have had an instance of how far this affects the interests of the public, in the case of the loss of the steamer "Stella," which, as will be remembered, was a passenger vessel trading between Southampton and one of the French ports which, through an error on the part of the captain, was run ashore, a large number of lives being lost. The relatives of many of the people

Mr. Warr.

drowned sued the London and South Western Railway Company for compensation, they being the owners of the vessel. The Court awarded the plaintiffs something like £150,000 in the aggregate, but under this limitation of liability, the owners of the vessel have been able to escape with a payment of something like £20,000, so that, in many cases, where widows were awarded £1,200 or £1,300 compensation for the loss of a husband, they have been only able to obtain from £50 to £100. Now, as I understand this Bill, shipowners want to apply the same principle to docks, ports, and harbours, so that if any damage is done to life and property in such places, their liability will be limited.

*MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR: Clause 1 has no reference whatever to loss of life or personal injury. It is concerned entirely with property.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I thank the hon. Member for that. I can assure him, if he is prepared to make it more plain in the clause that the limitation is not to apply to the loss of life and limb, my opposition will immediately cease, because it is a matter of indifference to me how ship-owners and dock-owners may settle their differences as to who is to pay for damage done. What I am concerned about is the interests of working men, not only of seamen, but of working men employed in and about docks. I can very well imagine the case of a dock under construction and a vessel running into one of the dams and causing it to be flooded while a number of men are working in it. I do not think that in such a case the shipowner's liability should be limited so that the relatives of the drowned men would be unable to obtain a fair amount of compensation. All I ask the hon. Member is, to undertake to make the clause more clear on this point. At present it is not clear, for it provides that the limitation of liability of the owners of any ship set up by Section 503 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in respect of loss or damage to vessels, goods, merchandises, "or other things," shall extend and apply to all cases where, without their actual fault, any loss or damage is caused to property, whether on land or water, or whether fixed or movable. If the hon. Member will give me a promise that in Committee

a clause will be accepted to make it clear that the Bill is not to apply to the loss of life or limb, then the opposition to the measure, so far as I am concerned, is dropped, as I do not concern myself at all as to how the dock companies arrange their business with the shipowners.

*MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR: If there is any doubt about the matter, which I do not think there is, I am quite prepared to agree to the addition of words making it clear that this clause has no reference to loss of life or personal injury.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: On that understanding, I do not think I need further detain the House.

MR. URE (Linlithgow): There are three conditions attached to the business particularly affected by this Bill which do not apply to other trades. In the first place the premises are not under the owner's personal supervision; in the second place he has not a free hand in regard to the control of the vessel or the engagement of the employees, because the State has stepped in and placed him under certain limitations, and, in the third place, any lack of skill or care on the part of those employed by him may entail an enormous amount of responsibility. The Legislature for these reasons has thought right to limit the responsibility, although that limitation of liability does not apply to cases in which the shipowner is personally at fault. The case of the dock-owners is totally different from that of the shipowners, and I confess I cannot see what right they have to ask for what they call reciprocity. I think that their claim is indefensible, although I understand that the shipowners are willing to introduce such a clause as is asked for. They will not benefit by a reciprocity clause or suffer by the want of it. The dockowner wants his claim limited to the extent of £8 per ton on the tonnage of the largest ship that enters his dock. This is not a limitation at all, because £8 per ton is beyond any claim of damage that any shipowner has been asked to pay since docks were first commenced. I am surprised that in the course of this debate those who represent the dockowners have not attempted to give us any information which will enable us to judge the extent of the claims they

anticipate. I have examined the records of the Scotch Courts for the purpose of ascertaining the facts, so that we may remove this discussion from the region of speculation. During the last quarter of a century in Scotland only six claims have been litigated between dock-owners and the owners of ships. In one case when a ship of moderate size was injured by coming in contact with a private pier the owner was awarded £750, which was far within the limit of £8 per ton on the tonnage of the ship. But the most serious case we have had investigated was one in which a large sailing ship entered a harbour, grounded upon some banks, settled down and broke her back. The North British Railway Company were sued by the owners of the ship for compensation and were awarded £5,000. The tonnage of the vessel was 1718, so that the statutory limit of compensation imposed on the dock-owners by this Bill would have been £13,700. In 1892 an accident occurred to a vessel in Kircudbright Harbour and only £300 was awarded, although the dock-owners would have been responsible for £1,400 under this Bill. It will thus be seen that accidents which occur in docks by which piers or wharves are damaged or ships injured do not involve very large claims, and the dangers which dock-owners fear are really imaginary. I entirely agree that Clause 2 involves serious difficulty. As I understand it, the promoters of this Bill desire that when a British shipowner and a foreign shipowner enter into litigation in our ports, each of them shall be at liberty, if he choose, to abandon his ship and so escape from further liability. It is stated that at the present moment, if a foreign shipowner abandons his ship, his liability ceases, but if a British shipowner pursues that course he may still be found responsible to the foreigner for £8 a ton. I think that is not quite a correct statement of the law of England, and it is certainly not a correct statement of the law of Scotland. I propose to consider this matter for a moment from the point of view of a Scotch lawyer. When a foreigner comes into a Scottish port to claim damages against a British shipowner, in consequence of a collision, he has to get to conjoin with him in the action a person of his own rank in life within the jurisdiction of the Court who is to be held responsible first for the costs

and secondly for the decorous conduct of the litigation, and if he is unsuccessful the gentleman who conjoins with him is found responsible for the costs, and there is an end of the matter. If, on the other hand, the foreigner is successful, he recovers from the British shipowner £8 per ton. If this Bill were to become law that result would not follow, and the British shipowner would be entitled to abandon his hulk and to say to the foreigner, "You can take it and make the best of it, and there is an end to my liability." That would be not only a grave but an unjust change of the law. In the case of a British shipowner suing a foreigner, the first step he must take in Scotland is to arrest the foreigner's ship if within the jurisdiction, or a sum of money however small; even 5s. would do. If he recovers his judgment and it happens that the value of the ship he has arrested is far within the amount he has recovered, he can then take the judgment to the foreigner's country and do his best to work out his remedy there. Then the injustice from which the British shipowner suffers arises, because when he takes this Scotch judgment to a foreign country it is of no avail to him, for the case is investigated afresh and the principles of foreign law are applied to it. I do not think that Clause 2 in this Bill, as it at present stands, would cure that injustice. It might be possible to frame a clause which would do justice in an ordinary case where there is a cross action between a foreign shipowner and a British shipowner in the Courts within our jurisdiction. A clause might be framed to the effect, that where there is a cross action of that kind either or both of the parties might be entitled to abandon their ship and so escape from further liability. But this clause should only apply in cases where there are cross actions. I know I may be asked why an owner of British cargo on a foreign ship should be precluded from recovering £8 per ton from the owner of a British ship which ran down the foreign ship, if the British shipowner chose to abandon his hulk and thus escape all further liability. That may appear to be hard, but what we have to consider is where lies the balance of hardship, and the House in Committee will have to ask itself if the hardship is not the greater on the British shipowner than on the British cargo-owner who carries his goods

Mr. Ure.

in the foreign ship. I think we are agreed that the first clause is sound in principle, and will be beneficent in practice, and I think the second clause might be so framed as to remove admitted injustices of shipowners.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): It will probably be convenient to the House if I state at once the view the Government take of this Bill. They do not take any exception to the principle of the first clause, though I will point out that certain difficulties in connection with the subject will have to be borne in mind. As regards the second clause the Government think there are fatal objections, and unless they receive from the promoters of the Bill an assurance that they will be prepared to strike out that clause they cannot allow the Bill to go to a Second Reading. Although the speeches we have heard on this matter have been most able and interesting, I think they have overlooked most important considerations which are bound up with this matter. As to the first clause, I agree that when once we have determined that limitation of liability shall be applied to ships, there is no *prima facie* reason why limitations of liability shall not be applied in the case where a ship, by negligent navigation, comes into collision with a dock. If a ship comes into collision with another ship anchored in the Mersey the liability of the shipowner is limited to £8 per ton, but if, a few yards further up, the ship comes into collision with a pier, the shipowner's liability is unlimited. There does not seem to be much logic in that distinction. The Government are prepared to say that the subject of the first clause is well worthy of discussion, and they do not think there can be any real answer to the claim of the shipowners. Then comes an objection from another standpoint, and I can assure my hon. and learned friend opposite that he has quite underrated the damage which might be occasioned by an accident in a dock. I understand that the case of the dock companies is that if a ship by negligent navigation runs full tilt at the dock gates and knocks them down, though the water may run out of the dock and damage to the extent of £50,000 or £100,000 be done, the liability of that ship is to be limited to £8 per ton. But supposing that ship, in consequence of

the dock master giving a wrong order, is stranded in the dock and breaks her back, the dock company have no limit to their liability. I admit that the real difficulty is to find on what principle the liability of the dock company can be limited, and I understand it is proposed to set up some hypothetical standard based on the tonnage of the largest ship that has ever entered the dock. But that would be establishing quite a new limitation of liability. All I say is that it does seem to me that the dock company has some right to say to the shipowner, "If you ask that when a ship runs down the dock gates its liability shall be limited to £8 a ton, there ought, at least, to be some reciprocity." The real difficulty will be as to whether the House can discover some equitable basis on which the principle of limited liability can be applied; but if the House can see its way to some clause which will give limited liability to the dockowner, the Government would have no objection to the first clause. I now come to a very much more important point, namely—whether for the first time this House is to enact, in regard to foreign ships, that a foreign plaintiff in British courts shall have a different measure of remedy to a British plaintiff, not on the ground that a less wrong has been done to him, but on the ground that in some other proceedings—in proceedings in the French courts, for instance—which the British shipowner may have to take, justice will not be done to him. This is not a Bill to put the English and the foreign law on the same footing. It is not a Bill to make abandonment the measure. It is a Bill to provide that the British shipowner, whose vessel has run down a foreign ship, shall pay £8 a ton or the value of the ship, whichever is the least. I would like to remind the House of a passage in the Report of the Committee of 1860, which brings out very clearly that the real reason for the limitation of liability is that to exempt shipowners from liability beyond the value of their ships would be to place a premium on the employment of worn out and inadequately manned ships. In 1862 Mr. Milner Gibson, who was a man of great experience in these matters, enforced that view, and contended that the owner of a good ship and the owner of a bad ship should be placed on the same level as to responsibility, and I think the

House will agree that that is a sound principle. Shipowners of the present day are gaining enormously by this limitation of liability, and I am bound to say if we were to reconsider the limitation of liability in the present day I very much doubt if the limits would be kept as low as £15 and £8 per ton. But let it be assumed for a moment that the object of this second clause is to assimilate the law of foreign countries to ours. Take the case of a vessel of 2,000 tons, of a value of £40,000 or £50,000. Her statutory limit in respect of the subject matter touched by this Bill is £16,000. That ship may run down another worth, with its cargo, £50,000, and be practically uninjured herself. According to French law, the vessel run down can recover the full value. In such a case abandonment means the abandonment of property worth £50,000. But in our Courts the British shipowner can get off in all cases with the payment of £8 a ton. I am sure that hon. Members interested in shipping have not considered the value of that consideration. But the most important objection to the clause is that it creates a different rule for two different plaintiffs, in the same Court, in respect of injury arising out of the same circumstances. The Court is to be told to apply a different rule when the plaintiff happens to be a foreigner to what it would apply if he were a British subject. That would be a most dangerous principle, and I am sure it would lead to the strongest and well-founded remonstrances on the part of foreign nations. The principle on which merchant shipping legislation in this country has always proceeded is to apply the same rules to British as to foreign ships, and I should certainly view with the greatest regret any measure which gave to the British shipowner a privilege over the foreigner. Indeed I am not at all sure that difficulty would not arise in connection with our existing treaty obligations. At present there are in existence treaties whereby we have given equal rights and privileges with British subjects in all matters of commerce and navigation to the subjects of foreign nations, and any such action as is proposed in this clause would in such cases form the ground of strong remonstrance. My hon. friends have a little understated the protection afforded to British shipowners by the Admiralty Court. It is provided by the Admiralty

Court Act of 1861 that whenever a foreign ship comes into the Admiralty Court and sues a British ship, the foreign ship shall give security to the extent of £8 a ton. That privilege in favour of British ship-owners exists at present. It may be sometimes evaded, but I know of, and have been concerned in, many cases in which it has been enforced. What a cogent argument could be brought against such a practice if the distinction as to value which is sought to be established by the Bill were set up. The promoters of the Bill say they want to bring about an international arrangement whereby the laws of nations will be made the same. This is a most admirable object, which I have for years been endeavouring to promote, but, in my judgment, there could not be a more retrograde step from such an object than to pass a Bill which makes a distinction between British ships and foreign ships, not on the ground that our law is unjust, but because in some other proceedings in the French Court you cannot get the measure of justice which you think you ought to have. That seems to me to be a class of legislation which shipowners ought to be very slow to adopt, and which I hope this House will not for a moment accept. With regard to the second clause, the real question is whether or not there is anything left to discuss. An appeal was made by the promoter of the Bill asking the Government to let the second clause be inquired into, but there is nothing which it contains to be inquired into by any Committee. The question to be decided is, Are you going to adhere to limited liability or not? If you are, in my opinion you must make that limited liability apply all round. We have had this afternoon, as I expected, from the hon. Gentlemen who have addressed the House a very interesting discussion. We cannot, however, overlook the grounds on which this limited liability rests, and I am quite sure we should be doing wrong in attempting to draw this distinction between British and foreign ships in regard to liability. For these reasons I am obliged to say that unless the promoters of this Bill say they will abandon the second clause the Government will have no alternative but to oppose the Second Reading. I think the promoters will be well advised if they agree to accept this view without putting forward the second clause.

Sir Richard Webster.

SIR R. T. REID (Dumfries Burghs): I may say that, in the main, I do not differ from the views which the Attorney General has expressed. I think we all agree that this Bill should be read a second time, but I wish to offer a few observations upon the measure. As regards the first clause of the Bill it seems to me that it is obviously fair that the same protection should be extended to owners of docks as is proposed to be extended to the owners of ships. If you extend a protection which is now enjoyed by owners of ships, why should persons on the other side enjoy a similar immunity? But this point seems to me to be so far agreed upon that it is quite unnecessary to waste any further time discussing it. I wish to make a few observations on the second clause, which the Attorney General, on behalf of the Government, has expressed his determination to oppose. I think there is in the existing state of the law, as administered in some ports of the Continent, in comparison with England, a real injustice towards British shipowners at the present time. Let me take for a moment, as an example, the case of a collision between a British ship and a French ship, tried in a French court. If the British ship was found to be in fault by the French tribunal, the result would be that the owner would have to pay according to the statutory limit laid down in British law—that is, he would have to pay £8 or £15 per ton as the case might be; if, on the other hand, the foreign ship was found to be at fault, the owner could escape liability altogether by abandoning the wreck. In the same litigation the plaintiff and the defendant are put upon an unequal footing.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: It may not be a wreck.

SIR R. T. REID: There may be a case on the other side, but not infrequently there are cases in which the differentiation between a British and a foreign ship in a foreign port causes a real injustice to the British owner. The Attorney General says there may be cases in which there is equal injustice done to foreign ship-owners. I do not think that is any real answer, because the point is this—that in foreign ports there is a different rule applied to British ships and to foreign ships. If a British ship and a French ship were in collision and were taken into

a French port, in the case of the British ship the limit of £8 and £15 would be applied, while in the case of the French ship that limit would not be applied. I think the President of the Board of Trade will find that that is so.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I have no knowledge of it.

SIR R. T. REID: Then allow me to assume, for the purposes of my argument, that that is the case. What is the rule, as I understand it, that is laid down in the French court for differentiation? It is the rule of the flag, that is, the English law is applied to the French court in the case of an English vessel. Now, how can that be got rid of unless you alter the English law in the case of a collision with a foreign ship? If I am right in my view of the law as applied in French and other foreign ports, that seems to me to be a fair reason for considering whether, in the case of a collision between British and foreign ships, some different rule from the existing rule should be applied according to the English law. Let me turn now for a moment to the other side of the Channel, and take the English Court—I think the Scotch Court is exactly the same. In the English Court both the plaintiff and the defendant, in the case of a collision between a foreign and a British ship, are placed in exactly the same position. Both can claim the benefit of the limitation of £8 or £15 per ton, but neither can claim the benefit of the plea which applies to the French Court that by abandoning the ship you can get rid of any further liability. That is the rule at present existing. My hon. friend the Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool has pointed out that there is some practical injustice in the way the rule is applied. He seemed to convey that you really got in English Courts no better remedy against the foreign shipowner than was represented by the value of the ship itself. That is, I suppose, because it is suggested that in some foreign ports they do not recognise the validity of English judgments, but are at liberty to overrule them, and see if they are founded upon their particular ideas of justice. That might open up the wider question of international relations, and whether or not justice is not very inadequately met by the manner in which

foreign courts treat the judgments of the English courts. That point, however, I will pass over, for what is suggested is that the rule in the English courts ought to be altered. The foreign courts offer an unequal treatment to the British in case of a collision, because they say that the rule of the flag is to be applied to British ships, and therefore the only way to remedy this injustice lies in altering the British law so that it can no longer be quoted and enforced in foreign ports to the disadvantage of British shipowners. I think some proposal might be entertained for differentiating between a collision on the part of British and foreign ships on the one side, and between British ships on the other. That is substantially what is proposed by this Bill. The Attorney General has said that he does not want to have two plaintiffs brought into the same court in respect to similar facts, and have a different rule applied between them. Let me investigate that case for a moment. To introduce any such rule would not be a denial of reciprocity in any way towards foreign nations, because we should apply to foreign nations our laws in the same way as we apply them to our own ships. Where there is a collision between British and foreign ships the law for the British ships would be exactly the same as for the foreign ships, and it does not seem to me that it would make any difference at all if a foreign Court said the rule between the two is different. In other words it seems to me that it is more desirable in a case of litigation that you should have equality between the plaintiff and the defendant who are the two parties to the case, than you should have equality between the plaintiff in the one case and the plaintiff in the other. The difference between the laws of any two States may be such that you cannot have a common basis for treating all vessels. Are you going to say that there is to be equal treatment between the plaintiff and the defendant, or are you going to say that the plaintiff and the defendant are to be governed by different rules and justify that upon the ground that it would be unfair to have two plaintiffs in different cases dealt with by a different rule? For my part I think there is not necessarily in principle any objection to so modifying the English law as to take away from foreign Courts this power and place the parties upon equal footing. All I have to

say upon this subject is that I do not think this is an enterprise which can safely be undertaken by a private Member's Bill. I think it is a matter of considerable difficulty, and I am not at all insensible to the consideration urged by the Attorney General that any such change might interfere with the commercial treaties subsisting between us and other countries. I do not think that a private Member could be or ought to be the reformer in a case of this kind. It seems to me that it is a matter for the Government, and, if I might suggest to the Government, it is one—and not the only one—in which some arrangement might be made between this country and foreign nations. I will give only one illustration. Take the case of a collision on the high seas between an English and a French ship. What rule is to prevail? The rules are different, and if the English courts get control one rule of law is applied. Not only this, but in English courts we have the most scrupulous administration of justice towards foreign nations in all cases of collisions. Therefore I cannot help thinking that not only in this particular matter, but also in regard to collisions on the high seas, a general rule might well be made the subject of some international arrangement; and if that is found to be practicable some method might be devised by which independent tribunals should be assented to by all nations, to prevent the injustice and the hardships which not infrequently occur between British and foreign ships in collision. I agree with the Second Reading of this Bill, but I also agree that, in my opinion, it would not be prudent for a private Member to persist in pressing the second clause in this Bill in its present form. At the same time, I think the subject is not one which can be dismissed quite so summarily as it has been by the Attorney General.

MR. MACIVER (Liverpool): While my right hon. friend was speaking it did occur to me that I never heard more complete nonsense than was contained in a large part of his speech. I refer more particularly to what he said in reference to the second clause of the Bill. I do not mean any disrespect, for his speech was admirable as regards his law, but wrong as regards his facts. In this respect it was absurdly and grotesquely

Sir R. T. Reid.

wrong. On his estimate of the value of shipping property the right hon. Gentleman's argument against the second clause of the Bill largely depended, and his figures ought to have been at least somewhere near the mark. But he spoke of vessels of 2,000 tons as if they were worth from £40,000 to £50,000 apiece, and he spoke also of a certain class of steamers as if they were worth £40 or £50 a ton. I should like him to name one such vessel worth anything approaching to any of those figures. He seems to forget that the limitation of liability applies to the gross tonnage and not to the net, and that the figures were overstated at least ten times. Perhaps I am rather putting the cart before the horse in taking the second clause first, but what I do wish to impress upon the House is, that in many ways British shipowners are at a disadvantage in competition with foreign owners, and all that we ask is that we should be allowed to compete on equal terms. The second clause in the Bill may not be the best that could be devised, but I think it is capable of amendment. I do, however, contend that the general spirit and intention of that clause is a step in the right direction, for it would remove many disadvantages from which shipowners are now suffering. This is only one of many measures which I hope will be brought forward in this House to help British shipping, although I do not look forward with much hope to any Government doing anything in this direction. The present Government is like former Governments when we desire to have anything done in the interests of British shipping. The time may come when the Government will be compelled to take up the suggestions which have been put forward for the protection of British shipping. No doubt we still have a great preponderance of British ships as compared with foreign ships, but I can look back to the time when that preponderance was much greater than it is to-day. In ports where formerly you only saw occasionally a foreign flag, you can now see in our docks foreign vessels in much greater number, and some of them are very fine foreign steamers indeed. A few years ago that was not so, and this is no idle statement that I am making. One of my hon. friends has spoken of the transfer of British shipping to foreign flags. The second clause in the Bill, however small a step it may be,

is, at all events, a step in the direction of lessening the disadvantage at which British owners are placed. We ask to be placed on equal terms with foreigners, and we ask for nothing more. In some degree, by our legislation, we have so advanced the foreigner that he is able to compete with us upon unfair terms, and I do not think that is a desirable state of things. As regards the first clause in the Bill, it is scarcely necessary for me to say anything, and I propose only saying a word or two about it. The Limitation of Liability Act was passed about the year 1862 or 1863, and at that time I was the chairman of the local Steamship Owners' Association. At that time it was felt that the state of the law was a positive disadvantage to the owner of a fine ship, as compared with the owner of an inferior one. The position in the previous state of the law was this, that the cheapest thing you could throw together was liable only up to her value, and the building of the better and more costly ships was discouraged, because they not merely had to face the competition, but just in proportion as more money was spent on a ship so was the liability for loss of cargo increased. Therefore it was felt that some sort of limitation of liability was necessary, and in those days £3 a ton was a fair average value for an ordinary cargo, and £15 a ton was deemed to be a fair average value for a good passenger steamer. The Attorney General quoted the Report of a Commission which entirely bears out what I have been saying. I remember from my own individual knowledge that as far as Liverpool was concerned the limitation of liability was a very real inducement to shipowners in the direction of building fine vessels and decreasing the number of inferior vessels. On these matters common law is not always common sense, and in the old days of 1862 or 1863 when the Limitation of Liability Act was enacted, the idea was that collisions of all sorts were to be included. It was intended in those days to mean collisions with piers or docks as well as with other ships. There is another instance which I want to put forward to show that the law is not always common sense, and it is this, that the original intention of the Act was a general limitation of liability to those things which I have mentioned, and to which it was intended at first that the

limitation should extend. I wish to say emphatically that I regard the second clause as the more important of the two, and I hope the hon. Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool will not relax his endeavours to get the injustices to which British shipowners are subject in competition with foreigners removed. I beg to support the Second Reading of the Bill.

*MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR said that in consideration of the promise given by the Government to accept Clause 1 he would abandon the second clause, not on its merits, but to leave it in the hands of the Government, who he hoped would remedy the grievance. The promoters would also accept a clause giving the dock companies a measure of protection similar to that given to the shipowners.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH: I beg leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

*MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): As the second clause is now practically gone I need not again discuss the very subtle points connected with this clause of which we have heard so much. The statement of the hon. Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool has removed any difficulty which I might have felt in supporting this Bill. There is one point which I think goes to the root of the whole question. It is that if the hon. Member for the Exchange Division at any future time desires to obtain any remedy for the grievances under which British shipowners suffer he will not achieve the object he has in view, unless he considers a little more carefully the form his remedy is to take. I understand the difficulty is that the French Court administers the law of the flag of the vessel which comes before it; that is to say, that it deals with the British vessel before it according to the law of the British flag. Therefore, if the British vessel is found in fault it is required to pay compensation upon the British scale of £8 or £15 per ton; while if the vessel was under the French flag it would be dealt with according to the French law, and the French owner could escape

liability by abandoning his vessel. The Bill of the hon. Member for the Exchange Division proposes to remove that grievance.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I do not desire to interrupt the hon. Member, but it was a great surprise to me to hear the statement by the hon. Member for Dumfries that the law of any foreign country applies the law of the flag, and allows the owner to escape by abandoning the vessel. I am perfectly certain that in the United States and other countries where the law of the flag applies they do not adopt the abandonment rule, which I do not think can be applied as a general rule.

*MR. BRYCE: I was very much surprised myself, but I have been assured on very good authority that such is the case. The Bill itself is based upon the assumption that this is the law. The view of the hon. Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool is that the grievance of which he complains will be removed if the British law is altered, because then the British law of the flag will still be administered in France, but the British law, if this Bill was passed, would not impose the law of £8 per ton, but a law allowing the British shipowner to abandon his vessel if it was not worth £8 a ton, and the hon. Member supposes that this Bill would have that effect. At the same time it does not follow that the change which the hon. Member proposes would be accepted in France. On the contrary, they might say that the law of the flag we will apply will be the law which the British apply between British ships, and the hon. Member does not propose to alter the law as between British ships. Supposing the Bill was to pass, it is at least quite possible that the French Court will hold that the law of England has not been changed, and they will administer the law as it was before. Admitting that there is a grievance in the case, I entirely agree that that grievance is one which deserves the attention of the Government, and it is one which the Government should try to deal with. I do not feel very sanguine about it, because I see the greatest difficulty in proceeding in the direction indicated in this Bill; but, on the other hand, if the Government approached foreign Powers

Mr. Bryce.

with the view of bringing about unanimity on this subject they would meet with our hearty sympathy and support. But we cannot be very sanguine as to the introduction of a reform of a matter which is so great, and which has been so long established between England and Continental countries. At the same time if the Government can see the least prospect of accomplishing this they will be attempting to do a thing which will be a great convenience to our shipping everywhere, and they will remove what is admitted to be a grievance from which British shipowners suffer. Our course with regard to this Bill is quite clear, and we ask the Government to acquiesce in the views we have expressed.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I do not propose to intervene at any length in this discussion, but I am very glad that the promoters of the Bill have recognised the justice of including the injury done in the case of damage to property in docks. There is one matter which I think ought to be brought before the House, and it is that this Bill appears to me to mean a limiting of the liability of shipowners. I submit that, in some respects, the liability of shipowners ought to be extended instead of being further limited. As far as I understand it, they are the only class of traders which are exempted from this liability. The shipowners as carriers oblige the consigners, more particularly of live stock, to sign consignment notes which practically contract the consigners out of any chance of obtaining a verdict in their favour in case of an action for any injury to their goods which may occur during transit. In this connection we have the opinion of the learned judge in Dublin who tried a case—

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member will not be in order in discussing the question of liability under special contracts.

MR. FIELD: I bow respectfully to your ruling, Mr. Speaker, but I understand that this Bill is intended to limit the liability of shipowners, and I was submitting that as carriers their liability ought to be the same as in the case of railways. I would suggest to the promoters of this Bill that this point should be considered in Committee because it is most important that consigners should be

protected in some way or other. I have no intention of occupying the time of the House further, and I merely bring this point before the House in order that it may be considered by the promoters of the Bill, and I will briefly state the reasons why. This question of the advisability of extending the liability of ship-owners instead of limiting it is one which I trust will be fully considered by the promoters of the Bill, because it is one of the utmost importance to that very large class of people who are interested in the carrying of live stock.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT (1897) EXTENSION BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. GOULDING (Wiltshire, Devizes): I desire to move the Second Reading of this Bill. When the Home Secretary introduced the Workmen's Compensation Bill he stated that it was proposed at first to limit its operations to dangerous trades, but that he hoped that before long the success of the Act would be such that it might be extended. The Act has been in force now for two years, and I think on the whole it has worked most beneficially. Certainly the evil forebodings which were indulged in as to the hardships it would inflict on employers, and the hindrances it would impose on trade, have not been realised. In fact, the working of the Act has made these predictions appear absolutely absurd, and it now stands as a bold and generous attempt to deal with a great social problem, and is certainly the most far-reaching of all the social problems proposed by the present Government. The defects in the question of employers' liability are, however, patent to hon. Members on both sides of the House, and Her Majesty's Government are pledged to deal with them. As regards the agricultural labourer the Employers' Liability Act of 1880 is practically a dead letter. Labourers living in the villages have no lawyers to consult and have no means to enable them to undertake an action. They are face to face with all kinds of difficulties in getting evidence to

support their case, especially when that evidence has to be frequently given by their fellow workmen under the same master. In cases which are fought most of the damages, when obtained, are exhausted in the expenses of prosecuting the action. The wages of agricultural labourers, although they have been increased in recent years, are yet only just sufficient for the support of themselves and their families in decency, and to enable them to contribute to a friendly or other society, and the result is that if the calamity of an accident befall them they are absolutely dependent on charity. I therefore sincerely hope that the House of Commons will, if not unanimously, at least by an overwhelming majority, declare that the time has come when the benefits of the Workmen's Compensation Act should be extended to the 1,700,000 labourers who are employed in the industry of agriculture. It may be said that accidents among agricultural labourers are few, but I venture to say that hardly a harvest passes that serious accidents do not occur, and with the increase in machinery, the liability to such accidents will be still further increased. Far more accidents occur even in ordinary times than is supposed. In my own division I have personal knowledge of four serious accidents occurring in four months. A carter engaged with a waggon had his foot so severely injured that he was laid up for a month; a boy was injured owing to a horse bolting; in another case a man was kicked by a horse and was laid up for some months in hospital, and in November, during the high gales, a man received injuries on Salisbury Plain by the overturning of a rick which resulted in his death. These cases alone in one single constituency show that there are far more accidents among agricultural labourers than people imagine, and when it is remembered that they are the only large body of workmen who have no organisation and no means of bringing their grievances forward, the necessity for legislation is increased. Complaint is very frequently made that only the old and the infirm and those who cannot get work in the towns work on the farms. Can it be wondered at? What has this House done to induce the agricultural labourer to stop on the land? The Act of 1897 encourages him to seek employment elsewhere. You cannot expect the agricultural labourer not to be

struck with the injustice of his position as compared with other working men living in the same localities employed on a railway or in a mill, who receive much better wages, and when an accident befall them receive compensation, whereas nothing remains for himself. Is it not common sense to suppose that unless Parliament takes into consideration the undoubted grievances of the working men engaged in agriculture, we shall still have the continued depopulation of our rural districts? This Bill simply extends the benefits of the Workmen's Compensation Act to all engaged on agricultural work. It has been limited to that extent, not because there is any desire that the Act should not be extended to other trades, but because, as practical men, we know that it is absolutely impossible for any Bill in charge of a private Member to pass through this House if it is of too large and ambitious a character. Therefore we limited the Bill to agricultural labourers in order that it might have some chance of success. The only objection which can be urged against it is the burden it would place upon the farmer. At the present time farmers have to pay 2s. 6d. for every £100 of wages they pay to cover their liability under the Employers' Liability Act of 1880, but they can secure for all workmen the great advantages of the Act of 1897 by the additional payment of 1s. for every £100 paid in wages or 3s. 6d. in all. There may be some difficulty in the case of farmers working sixty or seventy acres, but the hon. Member for the Horncastle Division of Lincolnshire said that he, as a landlord, would not allow such a miserable objection to stand in the way, and that it would be the duty of all intelligent landlords to bear the expense in cases where small farmers were not themselves able to effect an insurance policy. I think, moreover, that it would be perfectly possible for the number of small farmers to combine together and so effect an insurance policy. There is a further objection, and that is the impossibility of insuring as regards men who only come for a day's labour. Only a week ago a decision was given in the Court of Appeal that such workmen were outside the scope of the Act of 1897, and however we may regret that decision, we need not handicap ourselves now by considering the particular position of such men. In the division I have the honour

Mr. Goulding.

to represent many farmers now voluntarily insure to secure the benefit of the Act of 1897 for their men. I venture to press on the Government, who have undoubtedly shown very great interest in agriculture, that they will not only take a disinterested view with regard to this Bill, but that they will assist to pass it. The Government in 1897, the Jubilee of the Queen, extended the great boon, as I maintain it is, of the Workmen's Compensation Act to dangerous trades, and I know no better opportunity than the present for extending the same boon to the agricultural labourer. If there is one thing which the British people ought to be proud of it is the constant statement in the reports from South Africa that the bravery of our troops was splendid, and it should be remembered that the preponderating proportion of Tommy Atkins is drawn from the agricultural community. In my own division in a village containing only 300 inhabitants there are twenty at the seat of war to-day. I venture to hope that the House will carry the Second Reading of this Bill, and that the Government will see that this boon is conferred on the agricultural labourer.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Goulding.*)

*MR. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, Thirsk): I desire to say a few words in support of this Bill. I do not intend to wear a white sheet in connection with it, although I was one of the agricultural Members who voted against the inclusion of the agricultural labourer in the Act of 1897. I believe we were right then in the course which we took, and I believe I am right now in voting for this Bill. That may be thought a contradiction in terms, but it is not. The Act of 1897 was avowedly and explicitly an experiment, and if there is one thing a farmer hates more than another it is to be made the subject of an experiment. Further, the agricultural community opposes anything being done in a hurry. My constituents supported my vote in 1897 against the inclusion of the agricultural labourer in the Act on the grounds that if experiments were to be tried they should be tried on someone less valuable than the agricultural labourer. We were told

when the Act was passed that it would impose a very heavy burden, and would fall with great weight on the trades to which it applied. We were told, especially on the other side of the House, that it would result in old men being turned out of employment. There is no proof that it has done so, and no statistics have ever been shown to prove it. The rates of insurance are now very low since the insurance companies have come to their senses, and it has been shown that the burden has not been serious. But naturally in an industry like agriculture, where the profit is so small and the balance frequently on the other side, we naturally have nervousness when increased expenditure is proposed. What would be the increase if this Act is passed? I have made it my business to look into the question, and have applied to insurance companies for quotations. I find that a perfectly good and solvent company—I do not propose to advertise it by mentioning its name—is prepared to undertake the insurance of agricultural labourers against all accidents during their employment for five shillings per £100 paid in wages, and if accidents which disable for a fortnight are excluded they are prepared to insure for 3s. 6d. That, however, in my opinion, is too high a rate. When the Act of 1897 was passed 10s. per £100 paid in wages was asked, but the employers combined together and got themselves insured at 2s. 3d., and after one year's experience at that rate it was reduced to 1s. 6d. The small number of accidents which occur in agriculture, if spread over the enormous industry, will enable farmers to insure at a great deal less than 3s. 6d. All the gloomy forebodings which were indulged in in 1897 as to the results of the Act have been falsified by events, and I think we now may safely take another step forward. I believe that by combination among the farmers the rate for insurance would be reduced to a very low sum indeed. If an insurance company were only taking the risks on one farm they would charge of course higher rates than if the risks were spread over a number of farms or covered a great agricultural association, and then something would be taken off the farmer in the reduction of the poor rate, which would follow if all labourers were insured. I think the cost to the farmer would be small and the value to the labourer would

be very great if this Bill were passed. Town work has already great attraction for the agricultural labourer, and I think it is a pity that we should add the further attraction that if he wants the benefit of the Compensation Act he must go into a town. The great difficulty to my mind is the case of the small farmer having four or five acres, who calls in some neighbour, and gives him a couple of shillings to assist him on a particular day. I think such a man, who is almost as poor as the labourer, should not have to provide for the labourer for the rest of his natural life if an accident occurs during his employment. One of the cases referred to by my hon. friend shows that it is now the law that the Compensation Act does not apply to such a labourer. There seems to be some legal difficulty as to how far a farmer is responsible for accidents now. I believe it has been decided by a County Court judge that if a labourer is injured in connection with the work of the threshing machine the farmer is responsible under the Act of 1897. I think this Bill will encourage the farmers to insure; I believe they will be able to insure at very low rates, and that great benefit will be conferred on the agricultural labourer.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I am sure the House has listened with great interest and instruction to the information which the hon. Member has given us as to the process of conversion which has overtaken all classes of the agricultural interest. I hope we may regard the hon. Member in the words of the poet, as "the Knight of the Shire, who represents them all." Sitting on his left are two distinguished representatives of the agricultural industry—the hon. Member for the Newport division of Shropshire, whom we often hear on agricultural subjects, and the hon. Member the Member for Epping. I am sure they will both support this Bill. Behind him is another representative of the agricultural interest, the Member for the county in which I have the pleasure of residing. He generally expresses the views of the agricultural interest, and will, I hope, support the Bill. If that is so we have ample time this afternoon to pass it. Who is going to oppose it, when, after an experience of three or four years, even

the agricultural labourer is converted to a measure which is in favour of himself. I can remember questions in which the process of conversion of particular classes of the community occupied even longer than three years. There is only one body in this House whose conversion is required, and that is Her Majesty's Government. We have heard the views of the agricultural interest and the views of other interests, and it is only right that we should hear the views of Her Majesty's Government, and then we shall pass this Bill with acclamation, and you, Sir, will announce that it has been passed *nemine contradicente*. There is no argument which can be advanced for excepting the agricultural labourer. Machinery is now used to a great extent even in England for agricultural purposes, and it has long been employed in Scotland, and liability to accidents is, therefore, just as great as in other trades. There can be no rational ground of opposition, unless it be the opposition of a preponderate interest to apply an equal rule to all classes of the community in this respect. I do not know whether the process of conversion on questions of this kind takes place more easily towards the end rather than at the beginning of a Parliament. There are moments when men think very seriously of life, and that is when they are approaching its end. But though a death-bed repentance is, perhaps, not as good as a repentance in earlier years, still, at all events, it is valuable. The views I desire to hear are the views of the Government. The Home Secretary, though not an agricultural Member—[Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY: Oh, yes, I am.] At all events, he is a personal representative of agriculture to a large extent. He is one of the great landowners of this country, and we should like to hear in that capacity, as well as in his official capacity, his views on this Bill. I only desire to make a few brief remarks, because I do not want to waste time. We have heard the opinion of the agricultural interest, and if we only hear the official opinion of the Home Secretary in the same sense we shall be satisfied, we shall pass this Bill and go home rejoicing.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The right hon. Gentleman has been very

Sir William Harcourt.

jocular about death-bed repentances and about conversions, and he apparently wishes the House to believe that when the Government introduced the Workmen's Compensation Bill in 1897 they were not in favour of extending the principle of it to all trades. When the Government introduced the Bill it was admittedly as an experiment. It was a new departure unknown to the law of this country, and very unacceptable to many persons from a legal as well as a political point of view. When introducing the Bill we explained that it involved momentous consequences, and that we thought it would be safer if we applied it only to those industries in the country in which the greatest number of accidents occurred, and where there was a greater possibility of effecting insurance to cover the risk which would necessarily fall on the employer. We always have said—I myself said it, and my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who was so much responsible for the Bill, also said it—that when the Bill had been tested by experience in this country the Government hoped they would have an opportunity of proposing its extension. One hon. Gentleman in this House particularly represents seamen. There is a very much heavier rate of accident among seamen than among agricultural labourers, but I said we should require a separate Act of Parliament, as we could not deal in one Bill with seamen and other industries, but I hope the time will come, as I believe it will come, when the same principle will be employed to seamen also. But that is in the future. I was very glad to hear from the hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of this Bill, that the working of the Act of 1897 has been in the main so beneficial to the industries to which it has been applied, that the agricultural interest now seek to have it extended to them. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said that it took a long time to convert the agricultural labourer, but it was not the agricultural labourer who had to be converted, but the employer of the labourer who would have to bear the brunt of this legislation, and I think the employer was quite right to look after his own interests, and when a novel procedure of this kind was introduced and a new responsibility was thrown upon him, he was bound to consider the liability and, speaking commercially, to see how much in the £ it

meant to him. That was the reason why there were a considerable number of agricultural Members in this House who, in 1897, while desiring to see the Bill of that year extended to agricultural labourers, still desired—and the Government and the majority of the House agreed—that the Bill should in the first instance only be applied to those interests which were included in it. We are in a very different position now from that in which we were in 1897. As the right hon. Gentleman opposite said the other day, we have learned a good deal since then, and whereas we then introduced a new principle which frightened a good many employers of labour, it has now been found that it is possible to meet the liability by a comparatively light premium for insurance, and it has been proved beyond controversy that a very considerable boon has been bestowed by Parliament upon the working men of this country who came within the provisions of the Act. After three years' experience we are able to state now, and I think some credit might be taken to the Government for it, that in introducing this principle to a very large number of labourers—nearly one-half of the labouring population of this country—we have effected a very considerable social reform. Under these circumstances, of course, the Government are prepared to support this Bill. I cannot conceive anybody objecting to the principle of this Bill. When we come to the details, I think my hon. friend will find some difficulty in regard to the definition of an agricultural labourer. I am not aware that there is any statutory definition. In the Rating Act, which caused so much feeling in this House two or three years ago, there was a definition of agricultural land, but a definition will have to be found for the agricultural labourer, otherwise we shall be landed in difficulties not much less than those which now beset the courts in the interpretation of the Act of 1897. As to the general question of the Amendment of that Act, I have admitted in this House and elsewhere that there has been considerable difficulty in its interpretation, but I do not think that the number of claims which have been brought before the courts under the Act compare unfavourably with those brought under the Employers' Liability Act of 1880. The percentage of cases which have gone to the Court of Appeal

for ultimate decision is nothing like so large as under the Act of 1880, and if it were possible to get the figures of the claims which have been settled out of court, I think it would be found that a very infinitesimal proportion of the number of claims under the Act of 1897 have been adjudicated on. There is no doubt, however, that the Court of Appeal has been much occupied with some of the legal questions which have arisen under the Act. There is no doubt, owing to one or two recent decisions which have been given, that in some respects the Act does not appear to do for certain classes of labourers that which unquestionably it was the desire of the promoters of the Bill should be done for them. Therefore, I think that there will be before long a case for the revision of the Act; and I will go further and say that the question of the extension of the provisions of the Act, apart from its extension to the agricultural labourer, is intimately bound up with the construction of the Act itself. There are such questions as to the 30 feet limit—a limit which was taken for the purpose of convenience from the Factory Act, in order to make the measure clearly understood not only by lawyers, but by those whom it directly affected, and also for the purpose of providing machinery which would be intelligible. Questions of that kind are intimately bound up with questions on the amendment of the law. When I am asked whether the Government are prepared to introduce a Bill to amend and extend this Act, I can only say, considering the circumstances of the present session, that the time is scarcely ripe, either for introducing an amending Bill or an extending Bill. But when we are simply asked to extend to the agricultural labourer this Act, I can only say that the Government are prepared to assent to the Second Reading.

*MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): May I be allowed to congratulate the Government on their support of this Bill? Unlike the hon. Member for Thirsk, I was one of those who voted for the inclusion of the agricultural labourer in the Bill of 1897, and I maintain with a degree of logic greater than his, that I was right then and that I am right now. I want to ask the Home Secretary a question. Allusion has been made to the case of a man injured by a threshing machine, and

to that man receiving compensation under the Compensation Act. In my humble judgment that is bad law. I would ask whether a man who is injured in a barn where corn is being threshed by a machine, which corn was ultimately sold, does not come within the definition of the Act by the fact that he is preparing an article for sale "by steam, water, or other mechanical power." I brought the case before the Attorney General, and his opinion was that such a man would not be included within the Act. The right hon. Gentleman said he thought there might be a difficulty in describing what was an agricultural labourer. I believe that a definition of an agricultural labourer will be found in the Employers and Workmen Act, or in the Truck Act of 1831. The argument which was advanced in 1897 that there were no accidents in agriculture, and the further argument that the farmers could not afford to pay for insurance, have now been abandoned, and the agricultural labourer is to be admitted to the benefits of the Act.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): The inclusion of the agricultural labourer in the Act of 1897 was opposed mainly on the ground that farmers had very little time given to them in which to make the necessary arrangements for insurance. If the agricultural labourer were included in 1897 the Act would be looked upon with distrust and suspicion, whereas now it is accepted cheerfully and with a determination to carry it out in the best spirit. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire has hinted that some of us in supporting this measure are looking forward to possible political events; and I should like to clear myself from any such imputation. No sooner was the Act of 1897 passed than I turned my attention to making arrangements that every single man employed by me should obtain benefits similar to those in the Act. I am glad to say that for some time past every single man in my employ in any capacity has been standing on the level of those who come under the purview of the Act. Therefore it is fair to suppose that, while some of us considered it was necessary to support the exclusion of agricultural labourers before, we acknowledged that as soon as the right time came we would be anxious to include them, and that in the meantime we

Mr. Tennant.

were doing our best to bring about a state of feeling in the country to make that inclusion as easy as possible. Now, there will and must always remain some chance of individual cases of hardship in the working out of the Act, and when we come to discuss details it will be necessary to do what we can to obviate the possibility of individual hardship, and to secure that the Act shall work smoothly. It will be in the recollection of hon. Members that there is growing up amongst agricultural labourers a keen sense of their position and a desire to be put on all fours with their brothers in the factories and workshops in our cities. That is a feeling which we have not the slightest wish to stifle. The terms that would have been asked from the farmers when the original Act was passed to enable them to insure their labourers would have been extremely onerous, and would have weighed very heavily on the farmers. Speaking from personal experience, I can say that these terms are now light and easy, and can be arranged so as to work without any undue weight on the employers of labour. How far the term "agricultural labourer" is to be defined I do not know, but I do hope the definition will be as generous as possible, and that we shall not be afraid to include kindred occupations. I have no doubt whatever that in the term "agricultural labourer" every woodman, gateman, groom, or any man employed about a country house can be included. I venture to say this, because the Bill has the hearty support of the bulk of the hon. Members on both sides of the House who wish to see fair play done.

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street): I wish to join in congratulating Her Majesty's Government in supporting this Bill. I am glad to find that those who took an interest in the debates in 1897, in this House, have begun to admit that there was some injustice in that Bill, and are now prepared to accept the Bill under discussion, and to grant to agricultural labourers the benefits of the Workmen's Compensation Act. I agree with an hon. Member who said that the time was scarcely come yet for realising all the effects of the Act passed in 1897. I believe as experience is developed it will be found that that Act has conferred

immense benefits upon those who participate in it. I quite admit that there were very great difficulties indeed when the Act was passed, because it adopted an altogether new principle of compensation, and it was wise in the first instance to take special precautions in order to prevent any ill effects from the measure. But speaking as one who has had as much experience as any Member of this House of the working of the Act, I am bound to say many of the dangers which were anticipated have certainly not arisen. So far as the Act has been worked in Northumberland and Durham, we have had extremely few cases of litigation. That is owing, not to the clearness of the Act itself, but entirely to the common sense of the people in the North of England, who endeavour to adapt themselves to any measure which this House passes. If the interesting method in which this Bill has been dealt with in the North of England were considered I think it would be agreed that the common sense of employers and workmen has made up to a large extent for the deficiencies in the Act itself. Committees have been formed, consisting of three workmen and three employers, the secretary and the solicitor of the miners' union, and the secretary and solicitor of the employers' association, and it is remarkable how many cases which appeared to be extremely difficult have been settled by this most excellent arbitration clause. I cannot but agree with the hon. Gentleman below me who supported the inclusion of agricultural labourers in 1897. I voted for that Amendment, and so far as I am concerned I have never seen any reason whatever why all workmen of whatever class should not be put on exactly the same footing as the favoured workmen who have hitherto had the benefit of this Act. I cannot see why one law should affect one part of the population and not another. The only proper way to legislate is to deal with every person alike. I most heartily welcome the support of the Government to this Bill; and I trust that the Government will not be satisfied with including only agricultural labourers, but that the time is not far distant when every class of workmen will be included.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE (Norwich): The hon. Baronet who has just sat down explained that the reason why many in

1897 felt a difficulty as to the inclusion of agricultural labourers in the Workmen's Compensation Act was the dread that serious consequences would result therefrom to the trades and industries in which they were interested. Is it wonderful, then, that those interested in the great industry of agriculture, which at that time was suffering from depression, felt great anxiety also in the matter? We had no idea that the liability to be incurred would be anything like so small as experience has shown us it is. The hon. Baronet frankly stated that he had fears that very serious grievances would arise from the passing of the Act, but he has told us that these have been very happily disappointed. We had equally strong anxiety about our industry, but we have now found that to insure against our liabilities is not the heavy burden which we were afraid in 1897 it would be. My hon. friend the Member for Shropshire has alluded to the fact that, though the agricultural labourer was not included, he felt, as I have felt, that it was our duty as far as our own labourers were concerned, to give them equal security in case of accident as those engaged in more dangerous trades. I found that in order to meet all the liabilities under the Act an insurance of 3s. 6d. per £100 was sufficient; but I also found that by paying 5s. per £100 wages I could get my labourers far greater benefits than the Workmen's Compensation Act would give them, for instead of the benefits accruing a fortnight after the accident, as under the Act, they received the benefit immediately, the very time when a man most needs it. I therefore insured all my labourers. I re-echo the hope of my hon. and gallant friend that the definition of agricultural labourer shall not be made too narrow, but should include gardeners, woodmen, keepers, and all the workmen about an estate. I have experienced the advantages of this insurance myself. One of my own labourers suffered from an accident, and when I communicated with the office with which I carry on all my insurances I received a letter at once, stating that the man was to be paid 7s. per week so long as he was unable to work. I had the pleasure of taking down to the poor fellow the first 7s., and when I saw the great advantage it was to him, and the great pleasure it gave him when I handed him the money, I felt convinced that this was a benefit which ought to be

given to all engaged in agricultural industry. I am not surprised to hear that the Government will give their willing support to the Second Reading of the Bill. I always understood that it was their desire, after the experiment of the Act of 1897 had been fairly tried, to extend the advantages of that Bill to other occupations. I am glad we have made the advance to agricultural labourers; and speaking as a Member for a great borough, I am quite sure that the labourers in our industrial centres will be rejoiced that the benefits of the Compensation Act are to be extended to agricultural labourers.

*MR. F. W. WILSON (Mid Norfolk): There is no doubt that the agricultural labourers strongly resent their exclusion from the Workmen's Compensation Act. Since the Act was passed I have taken part in many meetings in Norfolk connected with vacancies in this House, and the labourers have always shown a very keen desire to be placed on an equality with other workmen in regard to compensation for injuries. The strength of their opinions has been pretty clearly shown by the recent bye-elections, and I am glad to think that the result has so keenly whetted the appetite of hon. Gentlemen opposite for this reform. When I had the pleasure in 1897 of seconding the Amendment for the inclusion of agricultural labourers, very few hon. Members on the Government side of the House followed me into the lobby, but now we find a cordial and delightful unanimity. Farmers were alarmed when this measure was first brought forward, but they have become acclimatised to it, and the offers of the insurance societies have put them completely at their ease. I have worked out what the insurance costs, and it comes to rather less than a penny per acre. Recent legislation has relieved them of 6d. to 9d. per acre in rates, and I think it only fair and an act of justice, that they should give a penny of that to the insurance of their labourers against the accidents to which they are liable.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I voted against the inclusion of the agricultural labourer in the Workmen's Compensation Act, I admit. I do not say I have been converted at all. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Hear! hear!"] I will not split terms with the hon. Gentleman;

Sir Samuel Hoare.

but at all events I have done as other hon. Members have done: I have changed my opinion. And my reason for doing so in company with the hon. Baronet the Member for Chester-le-Street is, that while we voted against the Bill, it was because we did not think the Bill had been sufficiently tried, and further because we did not know what the consequences would be. We did not know and could not find out from any insurance office what the terms would be on which we could insure any labourer. As a coal-owner I was terrified by the accounts given me by experts as to the cost, if the Workmen's Compensation Bill came into law. I went to my right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary, and asked him his opinion, for on many previous occasions he had been right. Well, the right hon. Gentleman proved to me that the fears of the coal owners were very much exaggerated, and that the Bill would not injure them at all. And we have found that to be the case. Farmers did show a great dislike to the inclusion of their labourers in the Bill. They object to any burden laid on the land. Now, Conservatives and Unionists have done a great deal for the farmers in the past — [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear! hear!"] — and they believed us when we went amongst them, and pointed out that to include agricultural labourers in the Act could not possibly hurt, but actually benefit them. I believe it is greatly owing to the way in which Conservative and Unionist Members, whom they recognise as true friends, have spoken to the farmers, that they have come to the conclusion that there is no danger in it. If that doctrine had been preached to the farmers entirely by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, I do not believe their conversion would have been so rapid. As regards the rates of insurance being extremely light, I may say I have insured every person in my employ. I have been told by the secretary of an insurance office that should the system come into general play the rate of 3s. 6d. would be reduced to 2s., which I think is as low as it can possibly go. I expected all along, if we were fortunate enough to obtain a good place in the ballot for the Bill, that we should succeed in obtaining the support of Her Majesty's Government; and that support has been cheerfully given. Hon. Members on this side

of the House have always found that, when we introduced a good private Bill, we invariably succeeded in obtaining the support of Her Majesty's Government. I hope the Government will assist us in passing this measure by referring it to the Grand Committee on Trade and Agriculture. As time goes on we shall find party differences sink into oblivion, and the agricultural labourers will discover that this side of the House has never been forgetful of them.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlebrough): I am glad that the Government have decided to support this measure. I was very pleased indeed that the Home Secretary held out some hope of extending the Act to the sea-faring community. I am sorry that no Amendment can be moved on this Bill which would bring seamen within its scope; but I trust when a Bill of a similar kind applicable to seamen is introduced shortly, hon. Members on the opposite side of the House will give it the same support as they have given to this Bill.

SIR. W. THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk): Farmers in Scotland, according to the custom of the country, pay the wages of their labourers in case of accidents, and, therefore, if the Bill is extended to Scotland they will be no worse off than now. In the district I represent, and also in Roxburghshire, the manufacturers have formed a mutual insurance company in connection with the Compensation Act. When we first of all applied to various insurance companies, as much as 7s. 6d. per £100 of wages was asked as a premium. The lowest offer we had was 4s. 6d. We then got up this mutual insurance company, and commenced by charging 2s. 6d., a rate which we found to pay very well. Since the operation of the Act we have had only one claim, and that was settled to the satisfaction of both parties. In regard to agricultural labourers, the premium will come to a great deal less. Accidents in the agricultural districts are very few, and I believe that if the farmers of Scotland, through some central body, such as the Scottish Farmers' Association, get up a mutual insurance company, in a very short time a rate of something like 1s. in £100 will be sufficient to meet all the accidents that occur. The hon. Baronet the Member for Chester-le-Street spoke

of including all classes of workmen under the Compensation Act. I quite agree with him, and I hope that, as many hon. Gentlemen have expressed the desire that the definition of agricultural labourer should not be drawn too narrowly, a considerable amount of latitude will be allowed in defining those who are to come under the operation of the Bill. I thank the Home Secretary sincerely for giving his assent to the Bill, which will afford great satisfaction to the great body of agricultural labourers.

*MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.): My right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouthshire twitted us very fairly on our change of opinion on this subject. I should prefer to call it a gradual development. I have no hesitation in saying that the farmers opposed the inclusion of agricultural labourers in the Compensation Act, because they thought it would increase the burdens on them at a time when they could hardly bear the burdens already imposed. When the original Bill was introduced it was thought that the insurance would cost 10s. 6d. per £100 of wages. According to my hon. friend who introduced the Bill this afternoon, 2s. 6d. or 3s. 6d. was enough. Of course there is a great difference between these figures. A farmer might be justly afraid of a half-guinea tax, and yet acquiesce in the Bill if he found it was so small as half-a-crown. An hon. Gentleman had said that the exclusion of agricultural labourers from the Bill drove them out of the villages into the towns. I never heard of such a case, and I really think it is great exaggeration. If he had said that if you gave the labourers good cottages and good gardens, that would induce them to remain in the villages, it would have been much more to the purpose. If the Act is altered and simplified so that the labourers will have some easy mode of getting compensation whenever any accident occurs, it would have my support. If the desire has been created in the agricultural labourers to come under the Act it must have been because they were told what an immense advantage it would be to them. I only hope they will not be disappointed. I find that the Act of 1897 has been most fruitful in litigation. In December, 1899, there was an article in *The Times* which said that of all the sources of litigation known, the Workmen's Act of

1897 had, in the two years of its existence, been the most fruitful in modern times, and probably surpassed in that respect the Act of 1881. Applications for arbitration were pouring into the County Courts by hundreds, and even thousands, and nothing short of fresh legislation could bring order out of this chaos. I approve, however, of the principle of the Bill, and I hope that the Home Secretary and the law officers of the Crown will take care that such amendments are made in Committee as will prevent litigation. I do not believe we would be doing any good to the agricultural labourers in bringing them under the Bill if it threw them into litigation.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am exceedingly pleased at the unanimity with which the Bill has been received to-day, and there seems a good prospect of its being passed into law within a short time. I am also exceedingly pleased that Gentlemen on this side of the House representing agricultural constituencies see the benefit which will accrue to labourers and farmers if this Bill becomes law. Further, I am pleased to see that there is now some great anxiety among hon. Gentlemen opposite that it should become law. I was rather afraid that there would not be unanimity in that quarter, for I do not think I am wrong in stating that a Bill of this kind has not been proposed by any hon. Gentleman opposite, and those who have been trying to get this Bill passed have not received much support from them. I am glad, however, that unanimity appears to reign at last in the House, and that in a short time the Bill will become law. I believe that it will be of benefit, not only to the labourers but to the farmers. The view I have always taken is that the farmers were not averse to paying for the accidents which occurred on the farm, so long as other people shared the burden. What the farmers did object to was that when accidents happened in other industries, such as colliery explosions, they had to contribute to a rate for compensation, while the farmers had to compensate their own men. I cannot quite agree with some observations which have fallen from hon. Members as to the rates of insurance. I can only hope that the insurance offices which have been mentioned as willing to insure agricultural labourers at the small

rate of 3s. 6d. per cent. will continue to do so, and consider that that is a sufficient premium. My own experience is different from that. No doubt I have been "done," and I have had to pay a considerably higher rate of insurance than necessary. I cannot agree with what fell from the hon. Member for Shropshire, that the small rate of 3s. 6d. will cover the insurance of all classes of men engaged in estate work. I do not wish it to go down to the farmers of the country that 3s. 6d. per cent. on the wages bill is enough. I am afraid the premium will be higher; but whether it is higher or lower, I am certain that all farmers in the country who are worth anything will be perfectly willing to help those men who are injured in farming, and that they will support this Bill.

MR. ASQUITH (Fife, East): There is not the slightest difference of opinion on this side of the House as to the desirability of including agricultural labourers within the scope of legislation of this kind. The hon. Member for Hampshire spoke of the litigation which has attended the interpretation and application of the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897. He seems to think we were conferring on the agricultural labourer a doubtful boon by giving him a chance of embarking on proceedings of that kind. I must honestly say that I do not think the amount of litigation which has taken place under the Act of 1897, large and deplorable as it is, is any great percentage of the number of accidents which have actually occurred. I am glad that the hon. Gentleman referred to it, because it enables me to point out to the House what is the real cause of nine-tenths of this litigation. It is the manner in which the Act was drawn, because the Act made a series of artificial distinctions between the different categories of our working-class population, and so established illogical compartments which have taxed all the resources of Her Majesty's judges to interpret. That is one of the reasons why I welcome this measure, and I am very glad that it has received the approval of the Government. It is, at any rate, the first step in the direction of removing the illogical anomalies and distinctions between different classes of our working population—the first step in a series of steps which I hope will ultimately be taken to place all these classes on the

Mr. Jeffreys.

same level and within the scope of the same law. As the unanimity with which this proposal has been received this afternoon has been contrasted with the very different greeting which was accorded to it only three years ago, may I remind the House that at that time the arguments which were urged against the inclusion of the agricultural population within the scope of the law were two—first, that accidents in agricultural employment were, relatively speaking, very few; and, secondly, that the farmer was, as a rule, a man of comparatively small means, and that, therefore, to him the burden of even a single accident would be a serious matter. It was pointed out at the time that those two arguments to a very large extent neutralise one another, because if the number of accidents were very small the burden on the farmer would be proportionately small.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: There was a third argument, namely, that we did not know how the Act would work.

MR. ASQUITH: That argument, of course, applied equally to every class of worker included in the Bill. I am very glad that the second of the two arguments I have mentioned has been frankly abandoned this afternoon, and as regards the first argument, as to the comparative rarity of accidents in agricultural employment, I hope and believe it is now generally recognised that it does not matter in the least to the injured man whether he belongs to a trade in which the percentage of accidents is fifty or one. The case of a man who has lost his finger or leg, and thereby his means of livelihood, is equally hard whether he belongs to a trade in which there is an accident every day in the week or only one day in the year. I could never see that there was any element of justice or common sense in so distinguishing between different branches of our industrial population. I am heartily glad to see the manner in which this Bill has been received by the House, and I trust we shall not stop here, but proceed to apply the principle of this measure in other directions, so that the whole of our working population may be included within the scope of the law.

MR. KENYON (Lancashire, Bury): I should not have troubled the House at

this stage but for the remark of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down as to the way in which the Act of 1897 was drawn. I will not dispute the right hon. Gentleman's judgment, but I have had some experience of the practical working of the Act which may be of use to the House. I believe a very large proportion of the cases which have been brought into the courts have arisen from the ridiculously low rates of premium which some of the insurance companies have charged. In one case it was stated that one shilling per cent. only had been charged, and when an unfortunate accident happened, and the insurance company was called upon to pay, they disputed the matter at every turn, and caused a great deal of irritation and annoyance, which, if they had first of all charged a reasonable premium, might have been avoided. It is better to pay a little more and have a satisfactory settlement without wrangling.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGE TO CROPS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said he wanted to know what this Bill was about.

MR. JEFFREYS said that the object of the Bill was simply to secure to farmers exactly the same compensation for damage to crops from the sparks of railway locomotives as was now obtained in the case of damage caused by sparks from ordinary road locomotives.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) thought it was a little too much to ask the House to agree to the Second Reading of such a Bill with explanation of such a very imperfect character. The law should not be extended unless a very good cause was made out for a change.

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday next.

BOILERS REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION (No. 2) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES ACT (1891) AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2 :—

Committee report progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

COLONIAL SOLICITORS BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading proposed.

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs) : This Bill has, I believe, the support of the Colonial Office. It provides simply that Solicitors in British possessions should have the same facility for practising here as British solicitors have for practising there.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

MIDWIVES (EXPENSES).

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such expenses as the Treasury may certify to have been necessarily incurred by the General Medical Council, under any Act of the present session, to secure the better training of midwives, and to regulate their practice (Queen's Recommendation signified), to-morrow.—(Sir John Gorst.)

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

First Report brought up, and read ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY BILL.

HARTLEPOOL GAS AND WATER BILL.

CHESHIRE LINES COMMITTEE BILL.

SPALDING URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (WATER) BILL.

WETHERBY DISTRICT WATER BILL.

Reported, with Amendments ; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MUNICIPAL TRADING COMMITTEE.

On the motion for the adjournment of the House—

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said he wished to ask a question with reference to the appointment of the Committee on Municipal Trading. The notice for the appointment of that Committee appeared on the Paper almost every day during the last session of Parliament, and at the close of the session the First Lord of the Treasury pledged himself that he would move the appointment of that Committee early this session. It was a most important question affecting many municipalities, and also affecting legislation now before the House. A motion for the appointment of the Committee had been put on the Paper by the Senior Whip of the Conservative party, and it had never come on. He therefore appealed to the First Lord to say whether the Government intended to persevere with that appointment, and if he would put the motion down, when the sense of the House could be taken upon it.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said he had already given notice of a question on the subject for to-morrow. It was most important to get this belated Committee appointed before Easter, otherwise it might be delayed for an indefinite time.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) sincerely hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would not make too much of the application now made to him. The demand for a Municipal Trading Committee proceeded from a very limited number of Members inside the House, or

of people outside. [HON MEMBERS: "No, no."] That was his view. Beyond a few company promoters who met at the Society of Arts, he did not know of anybody who was interested. And what was more, if the right hon. Gentleman acceded to the request he would have to look forward to considerable discussion as to what the terms of the reference should be. Already the mere fact of the notice appearing on the Paper had been unjustly and unfairly used by counsel before a Committee upstairs, who actually argued as if the Committee on Municipal Trading had been already appointed, with the result that the Bill before that Committee had not passed as put before it. He would be the last man in the world to attribute either partiality or unfairness to that most admirable tribunal, a Parliamentary Committee. The unfairness came from the representations made to the Committee by the counsel improperly using his position to make an unauthorised statement. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman not to listen to the appeal made by the Members for Wolverhampton and East Islington, but to let the proposal for the Committee take its chance. However, if he did accede to the request, he might rely upon it there would be a thorough discussion of this important subject.

MR. JONATHAN SAMUEL (Stockton) thought it was essential in the interests of municipalities that this question should be settled, for he knew of a case where a very important corporation promoted a Bill this session to which, when it came on last week, there was no opposition either from district councils or county councils outside the municipality, but on account of this pending motion for inquiry into municipal trading it was decided by the Committee to split up the Bill, and they struck out a very large portion of it. He thought therefore the House ought to decide the question whether the Committee was to sit and take into consideration to what limits municipalities ought to go in trading concerns. It was a very important matter, because municipalities should not be put to the expense of promoting Bills, which the House of Commons had allowed to pass in years gone by, if the fact that this inquiry was pending was to be used to defeat such Bills.

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said this was a most important subject, and he did not think any speech which had been made was a stronger argument for this inquiry being held at once than that of the hon. Member for Battersea.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) said that the Government would not get this Committee without considerable discussion. He hoped the First Lord would state about what time the motion would come on. It had been on the Paper for the last five nights.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) said that in regard to the appeal made to him by his right hon. friend, he might remind him that the course pursued on this particular matter was that always taken. He did not want any inconvenience to be caused to hon. Gentlemen. In the short discussion that had taken place there seemed to be a feeling not to go on with the Committee, and he was appealed to to drop it, or at all events not to give facilities for its appointment. He confessed that the worst and most impractical course of all would be to leave the matter indefinite, and hanging over not only the House in its general capacity, but over the Committees of the House, and therefore interfere with the policy which they might otherwise be disposed to pursue in regard to Bills before them. He thought that they ought either to drop all idea of a Committee, or put the House in a position to settle the question of its appointment. He thought it would cause disappointment in the House if the proposals were now abandoned. He, however, unfortunately could not say when he would be able to find an opportunity of moving the motion. The Government had only Mondays and Thursdays available. On Tuesdays the House had given the Government special privileges, but only for financial business. In the meantime finance was pressing, and they must deal with the Budget and other matters before they turned their attention to other subjects. He felt the force of the arguments that had been used, and he would endeavour at the earliest convenient opportunity to find some occasion on which the motion could be discussed, supposing they were not sufficiently fortu-

nate to get it on in the interstices between other business before many weeks were over.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said that the First Lord of the Treasury had given the Irish Members the next day for the debate on the financial arrangements of Ireland. He understood that a private Bill of enormous magnitude had been put down on the Paper in front of the Irish debate, and that the discussion on the Bill might last for three or four hours. He asked the First Lord whether he could not prevent that Bill being put down in such a manner as would practically render nugatory his grant of the whole of Thursday for the Irish debate.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said the hon. Gentleman was perfectly correct in saying that a Bill had been put down before the Financial Arrangements of Ireland motion. He was sorry for it; but he had no control over it, as the order of the Paper in respect to these Bills was settled by the Committee of Selection, and such Bills had the disagreeable trick of appearing on the Paper when most inconvenient. There was no desire on that side of the House to make long speeches on the subject of the Bill, and he trusted that there would be no undue delay in getting to the motion of the hon. Member for East Donegal.

Adjourned at ten minutes before
Six of the clock.

APPENDIX I.

MEMORANDUM

OF THE

SECRETARY OF STATE

RELATING TO THE

ARMY ESTIMATES FOR 1900-1901.

Presented to Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

The Army Estimates of 1900-1901 have been framed under the following abnormal conditions :—

- (a.) Provision has to be made for carrying on the war in South Africa.
- (b.) It has been decided to make at once an addition to the permanent strength of the Army.
- (c.) Temporary measures have been authorised for the purpose of increasing the numbers and efficiency of the force available for the defence of the United Kingdom.

With regard to (a), it is of interest to compare the regimental numbers of all ranks serving with the Colours at home and abroad on the 1st January, 1899, and 1st January, 1900.

	1899.	1900.
HOME AND COLONIES.		
Household Cavalry	1,298	1,327
Cavalry of the Line	12,169	18,890
Royal Artillery, Horse and Field	10,195	18,803
" Mountain and Garrison	15,722	18,119
Royal Engineers	7,637	10,210
Foot Guards	7,249	12,008
Infantry	87,085	133,743
Colonial Corps	7,242	8,778
Army Service Corps, &c.	9,266	13,085
	157,863	234,963
INDIA (all arms)	74,467	66,581
Total	232,330	301,544

ii.

MEMORANDUM—ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

The above numbers do not include the Militia, the whole of which has been or will be embodied (about 100,000 men), the Imperial Yeomanry (about 10,000 men), the enlisted Volunteers (about 9,000, exclusive of the waiting companies), or a large force of Colonial troops, which may be estimated at about 35,000 men.

The number with the Colours is constantly increased by recruiting for existing units and for others to be raised, by the recall from time to time of men from the remainder of the Reserve, and by the enlistment of men for the Royal Reserve battalions to be referred to hereafter.

Taking all these together, and deducting the force remaining in India, the full pay and subsistence of about 500,000 men has to be provided for.

The decrease in the force in India on 1st January, 1900, as compared with the 1st January, 1899, is due to the fact that—

- 4 Cavalry regiments,
- 2 Royal Horse Artillery batteries,
- 3 Royal Field Artillery batteries,
- 4 Infantry battalions,
- 3 Mounted Infantry companies,

have been temporarily withdrawn from the Indian Establishment for the purpose of the war, and brought on to the British Establishment.

(b.) The measures in contemplation for permanently adding to the strength and efficiency of the Army, as well as those intended to meet special and temporary requirements, have already been made known, and it is only necessary to recapitulate them briefly.

The following are the chief permanent additions to our military forces:—

Seven batteries of Royal Horse Artillery, and thirty-six batteries of Royal Field Artillery, will be raised, so as to provide the Artillery for two more Army-Corps and two more Cavalry Brigades. Three howitzer batteries for each Army-Corps (twelve in all) will also be formed.

In time of peace, the new Horse and Field batteries will be retained on a reduced establishment.

The formation of new dépôts for the Field Artillery will enable reservists of that arm to rejoin and be equipped at their dépôts, like Infantry reservists.

Additions will be made to the Royal Engineers amounting to a total of 2,038 of all ranks.

The growth of our Imperial responsibilities, and, in particular, the course of events in South Africa, render it necessary to increase the force of Infantry available to furnish garrisons for Colonial Stations.

In June last, before the war broke out, the number of battalions at home and abroad was as follows:—

India	...	...	...	...	52
Colonies and Egypt	...	...	...	...	16½
South Africa	...	...	...	...	6½
Crete	...	...	...	...	1
Total					76
					<hr/>
At home	...	...	...	...	69
Authorized, but not yet raised	...	...	...	...	3
Total					72
					<hr/>

At that time, the garrison of Malta was short by one battalion of its authorised strength. This deficiency may be taken as balanced by the presence of a battalion in Crete.

There was, therefore, an excess of battalions abroad over battalions at home of four. When a third battalion of Guards is stationed at Gibraltar this deficiency will be reduced to two.

To make this deficiency good, and to meet the certain need for the prolonged maintenance of an increased force abroad, it is proposed to raise 12 new Line battalions, attaching them as 3rd and 4th battalions to existing regiments.

An endeavour will be made to add to the number of men engaged for three years' service with the Colours in each battalion of Infantry serving at home.

It has not, however, up to the present time, been found possible to obtain the full number authorised for each battalion.

An addition of 29 companies (2,220 of all ranks) will be made to the Army Service Corps, of 8 Companies (450 of all ranks) to the Army Ordnance Corps, and of 260 of all ranks to the Army Medical Corps. Provision is also made for the pay of two native Indian Infantry Regiments for the garrison of Mauritius, one of these to replace the British Central African Regiment, recently sent to Somaliland. Two more native Indian battalions have been temporarily borrowed to replace British battalions withdrawn from Ceylon and Singapore.

The messing allowance given to Militia during embodiment will henceforth also be given to them during the ordinary annual training.

The Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers will be provided with regiment transport.

The whole of the Volunteer Artillery will be re-armed, part with semimobile guns, 4.7-inch, part with 15-pr. field guns. A large number of guns of the former class have been ordered; the re-armament of the batteries, now armed with 16-prs., can probably be best carried out by placing in their hands the 15-prs. now with the Royal Field Artillery, and supplying the latter with a new gun, either of the design according to which the Field batteries now under construction are being manufactured, or of any still later type suggested by the experience of the war.

(c.) The chief temporary measures for increasing the numbers and efficiency of the Forces in the United Kingdom are these:—

The non-commissioned officers and men of the squadron sent to South Africa from the Household Cavalry Regiments will be treated as supernumeraries, and their places filled up by enlistment.

Four Cavalry regiments will be formed from men of the Reserve squadrons, now in this country, of Cavalry regiments abroad.

Officers and men who have served in the Regular Forces have been invited to return to the Colours on a short engagement, the men receiving a bounty of 22*l.*; Officers and men of the Infantry will be formed into Reserve battalions, to be designated Royal Reserve battalions.

Officers and men of Artillery and Cavalry will be utilised with their own arms of the Service.

The whole of the Militia will be embodied in the spring, and advantage will be taken of this to give the force special training in large camps.

It has been decided to increase, in cases of protracted embodiment, the gratuity paid to Militiamen, and to offer bounties of £5 to men re-engaging while in the Militia, or re-enlisting after they have left the Force.

Provision is made for giving the Yeomanry special training in camp during the summer. The contingent allowance will be increased from £3 to £5 a man to meet the exceptional expenses involved. Every Yeoman will receive the sum of 5*l.* in consideration of his bringing a horse to camp for this special training.

Like the Militia and Yeomanry, the Volunteers will be afforded special opportunities of training in camps during the coming summer under suitable conditions as to pay and allowances. The details of these are under consideration.

The number of recruits raised during the year 1899 was 42,700, as compared with 40,729 in 1898, 35,015 in 1897, and 28,532 in 1896. Taking the number of British recruits alone, 40,207 were raised last year, as against 38,418, 33,722, and 27,809 in the three preceding years. The percentage of "Specials" was 34.2, as against 33.8 in 1898, 29.0 in 1897, and 18.0 in 1896.

The sum taken in the estimates for warlike stores represents a small part only of the expenditure which will have to be incurred on this account.

iv.

MEMORANDUM—ARMY ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

The war in South Africa has involved the employment on active service of a force exceeding in number that which has been contemplated in the schemes of mobilization for service abroad. The equipment of this force and of the Colonial contingents has made large inroads upon our Reserves, and not only will the stores taken from these have to be replaced, but the Reserves themselves must be largely augmented. The extent to which such an increase is necessary forms the subject of investigations which are still proceeding.

It has been decided to accelerate the completion of the programme for the re-armament of the fortresses at home and abroad, which, as was stated in the Memorandum on Army Estimates for 1899-1900, was adopted last year after a general revision of our schemes of defence.

The total of the Army Estimates for 1900-01 amounts to £61,499,400, while the number of men to be voted is 430,000.

The following table shows the comparison with the figures for the current year.

1899-1900.				1900-01.
	Original Estimate.	Supplementary Estimate.	Total.	
Vote A. ...	184,853	155,000	339,853	430,000
Votes 1-16 ...	£ 20,617,200	£ 23,000,000	£ 43,617,200	£ 61,499,400

As regards the total of Vote A (men), 212,449 may be regarded as permanent, the balance being due to the war in South Africa and to the special measures for home defence. The estimates show in detail only the normal or permanent establishment.

The £61,499,400 is accounted for as follows :—

	£
1. Normal estimate	21,777,700
2. Permanent additions to the Army	1,925,000
3. Special temporary measures for Home defence...	6,228,000
4. War charges	31,568,700
Total	<u>£61,499,400</u>

The normal estimate of £21,777,700 shows an increase of £1,160,500 as compared with the original estimate for 1899-1900 ; this is mainly due to the provision made for further instalments of the increases to the Army commenced in previous years, to the provision for the full Volunteer capitation grant, to the rise in prices, and to an additional annuity required under the Barrack Acts.

The war charges are based on the assumption that the full field force will be maintained in South Africa till the 30th September, and a reduced force for the remainder of the year, but the estimates contain no provision for terminal charges, such as the transport home of the troops and gratuities on demobilization.

This vote shows an excess of £8,691,000 over the original vote for 1899-1900, due—

1. To permanent increases of establishment.
2. To temporary increases for home defence.
3. War charges.

In addition to the measures already enumerated for the permanent and for the temporary increase of the Army, Vote 1 provides for the completion of the programmes of increases to the Army commenced in 1897, 1898, and 1899.

The principal war charges provided for in this vote are the pay of the Army Reserve recalled to the Colours, the pay, etc., of the troops borrowed from India, of the South African local forces, of contingents from Colonies outside South Africa, of the Corps of the Imperial Yeomanry, the Volunteer companies attached to Regular units in South Africa, and the City of London Imperial Volunteers, and the wages of the large number of civilians necessarily employed in South Africa as muleteers and on other miscellaneous duties.

This Vote has been nearly doubled owing to the war. All the available Officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps ordinarily on the Home Establishment have been sent to South Africa, and their places at home have been filled by the employment of retired Officers and civil medical practitioners. In addition a large number (223) of civil surgeons have been sent to the seat of war. The services of seven surgeons of eminence have been accepted as "Consulting Surgeons" to the Army in the Field. The Army Nursing Reserve, which was constituted in 1897, has been largely drawn upon to supplement the Army Nursing Service in the Field and at home, and the services of members of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade have been largely utilised. Provision has been made for a large increase of Officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps, and a further addition has been made to the establishment of non-commissioned officers and men.

Provision has been made for the embodiment for the greater part of the year of the whole Militia, and for the already explained increase in the bounties. Money has been taken in other votes for the supply of regimental transport.

It has been assumed that the places of the members of the Yeomanry who have joined the Imperial Yeomanry will be filled by recruiting. Provision has been made for this and for the training of the whole Yeomanry Force for a period not exceeding a month. Provision is also made for an increase in the Contingent Allowance, and in the allowances of Officers under instruction.

The increase on this Vote is partly due to provision being made for the full capitation allowances, the Vote for 1899-1900 having been relieved of half the charges by means of a Supplementary Estimate in 1898-99. A large sum has been taken with the object of enabling the Volunteers to carry out an extended training in camp. Volunteer corps will be entitled to the ordinary efficiency grants in respect of the Officers and men who have been withdrawn for service in South Africa. It is hoped that not only will their places be filled, but that advantage will be taken of the permission to recruit above the present regimental establishments. An addition has been made to the sum allotted for travelling allowance for attendance at shooting practice, to admit of a more extended use of the ranges. The provision which was made last year on a small scale to enable Volunteer Corps to hire horses and wagons in order to practise transport duties in camp has been considerably extended, and a large addition has been made to the grants for the movement of guns of position. An additional amount is taken for an increase of Volunteer Officers attending schools of instruction.

Very large amounts are required for land and sea transport, a large proportion of the latter being to meet liabilities incurred during the present financial year. Arrangements have been made for the retention of a number of transports, partly in South African waters for the transfer of troops from one portion of the seat of war to another, and partly for the conveyance home of invalids and wounded, and for the despatch of reinforcements, and of drafts to make good the waste among the troops in the field. It is also necessary to provide for the conveyance of further consignments of supplies, stores, and animals to South Africa. The item for land transport provides not only for the conveyance of troops and stores by railway but also for the hire of ox transport in the field. The vote includes sums for the purchase of horses and mules to make good the waste occurring in the large number of animals in South Africa, and for the purchase of horses for the additions to the Artillery and other arms of the Service. Money has also been taken under this vote for Regimental transport for the Militia and Yeomanry.

The increase on the Supply Vote, apart from the war and the special augmentation of the Army, would have been about £200,000, due to a rise in the cost of the bread and meat ration, and in the price of coal, and to increases of the Army authorised in former years. The maintenance of the Field Force in South Africa

demands an expenditure of nearly £7,500,000. Field rations are provided not only for the troops, but for nearly 30,000 civilians employed as drivers of transport wagons, labourers, etc., and forage is supplied for some 80,000 horses and mules, as well as for draught oxen. The Colonial allowance granted to Officers serving in South Africa has been practically doubled. A four months' supply of food and forage is being maintained in South Africa as a reserve. The rate of Separation allowance to the families of reservists, embodied Militia, and others who are not in occupation of public quarters has been increased by about one-third. There is also provision under this Vote for the half wages paid to the families of men in Government employment before the war.

Nearly £2,200,000 is required to provide supplies and allowances for the Royal Reserve battalions, the new units of Artillery, and other increases to the Army, as well as for the embodied Militia.

The increase on the Clothing Vote, apart from the special provision for the war and the increase to the Army, is due chiefly to a rise in the price of wool.

Nearly £2,800,000 is required for the war, a considerable portion of which is to meet liabilities for clothing the Field Force incurred, but which will probably not be brought into payment before the close of 1899-1900, and also for the necessary reserves of clothing to meet the issues to the troops in the field. Issues of clothing are also provided for the special increases to the Army and for the embodied Militia.

The increase on the Vote for Warlike Stores, apart from war charges and other special services, amounts to £719,000, provision being made for the equipment of the force to be permanently added to the Army. About £750,000 is also taken for the purchase of a number of semi-mobile guns of position. £4,750,000 is provided for services in connection with the war and the measures temporarily adopted to increase the force at home.

Provision is also made for the more rapid completion, already alluded to, of the programme for the rearmament of our fortresses.

The increase on Vote 10 is partly automatic, owing to the necessity of providing for a further annuity in repayment of sums borrowed under the Barrack Act of 1890. The building of barracks for a second Infantry battalion which it has been decided to station at Bermuda will be begun. Additional accommodation will be provided for the Inspection Department at Woolwich Arsenal.

The increase in connection with the war amounts to £1,300,000. £500,000 is provided for huts required for the temporary accommodation of the troops to be added to the Army at home, and the same amount for hutting which has been ordered for the troops who may be retained in South Africa after the conclusion of active operations. A scheme is in preparation for providing the barracks necessary for the forces which will be permanently added to the Army. £300,000 is provided for Engineer services in the field, and hospitals, storehouses, etc., in South Africa, and also for the increased hospital accommodation which will be required in this country for the invalids and wounded.

The increase on the War Office Vote is almost entirely due to the war, and more than half is due to the charge for foreign telegrams; the remainder provides for additional temporary staff, and for the appointment of a Military Transport Officer, who is stationed at the Admiralty; it is proposed also to appoint a member of the Head-quarter Staff who will be specially charged with business connected with the Auxiliary Forces.

The increase in the non-effective votes is mainly due to the war. There is an increase of about £100,000 in the provision for pensions and gratuities to wounded Officers, and to widows and children of Officers who lose their lives on service, but this is discounted to a large extent by the cessation of the retired pay and half-pay of Officers who are employed owing to the war and the suspension of voluntary retirement. £50,000 additional is provided for Chelsea pensions for the non-commissioned officers and men disabled by the war. Officers and men of all the Colonial and local forces in Imperial pay, as well as civilian surgeons, etc., are eligible for these pensions and gratuities.

27th February, 1900.

LANSDOWNE.

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS. SESSION 1900.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, etc., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

(Continuation of List given in preceding Volume).

Title of Paper.	Date of Presentation.	Period (after Presentation) to lie upon the Table.
Western Australia (Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899),—Copy of The Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899, of Western Australia, No. 19 [13 and 14 Vic., c. 59, s. 32]	5 March	30 days
Western Australia (Electoral Act, 1899),—Copy of the Electoral Act, 1899, of Western Australia, No. 20 [13 and 14 Vic., c. 59, s. 32]	5 March	30 days
Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889 (Ordinance),—Copy of Ordinance No. 1 of the University Court of the University of Edinburgh, providing for the separation of the teaching of Medical Jurisprudence or Forensic Medicine and Public Health in the University of Edinburgh [52 and 53 Vic., c. 55, s. 20 (1)]	7 March	12 weeks
Inebriate Reformatories (Scotland) (Regulations),—Copy of Regulations under The Inebriates Act, 1898, made by the Secretary for Scotland for the Rule and Management of a State Inebriate Reformatory, and for the classification, treatment, employment, and control of persons sent to it, and for their absence under Licence [61 and 62 Vic., c. 60, s. 21 (1)]	9 March	4 weeks (whilst the House is sitting)

Title of Paper.	Date of Presentation.	Period (after Presentation) to lie upon the Table.
London Government Act, 1899 (Metropolitan Boroughs),—Copy of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of each of the under-mentioned Metropolitan Boroughs, and incorporating the Council thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith:—Battersea, Bermondsey, Bethnal Green, Deptford, Fulham, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith, Hampstead, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Poplar, St. Marylebone, Shore-ditch, Southwark, Stoke Newington, Wandsworth, and Woolwich [62 and 63 Vic., c. 14, s. 15 (2)].	13 March	30 days
London Government Act, 1899 (Metropolitan Boroughs),—Copy of Draft of Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Camberwell and Westminster, and incorporating the Councils thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith [62 and 63 Vic., c. 14, s. 15 (2)].	16 March	30 days

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[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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Amendt. = Amendment. *Os.* = Observations. *Qs.* = Questions. *As.* = Answers.
Com. = Committee. *Con.* = Consideration. *Rep.* = Report. Where in the Index * is
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Rt. Hon. J. Atkinson.

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